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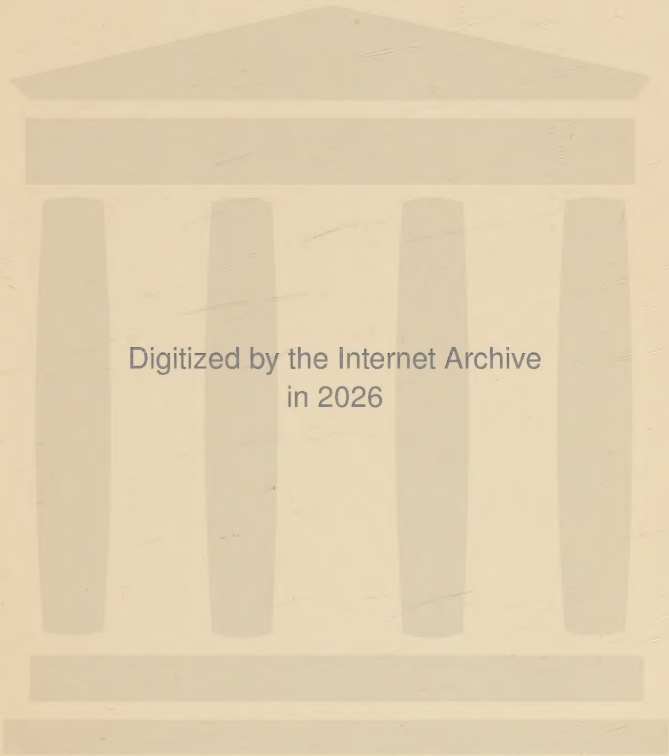
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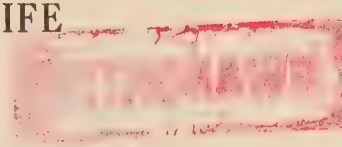

BY THE

REV. MATTHEW RUSSELL, S.J.
AUTHOR OF "AT HOME WITH GOD," "AMONG THE BLESSED," ETC.

"Hic liber, honori soceri mei [sororum mearum] destinatus,
professione pietatis aut laudatus erit aut excusatus"
Tacitus

WITH FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE.

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century there were born to Arthur and Margaret Russell, of Newry and Killowen, six children: Mary (1825-1838), Elizabeth (1827-1876), Katherine (1829-1898), Sarah (1831-1902), Charles (1832-1900), and Matthew (1834-?). The first to come was also the first to go, in her childhood; the last arrival has not yet departed. The three who lived to womanhood became Sisters of Mercy. Why, then, is not this book in three parts instead of two? Because the form of it and the title were chosen after these two sketches were written. The eldest sister might well have had a little monograph of her own, for she was a very interesting and winsome personality, though her shorter life and her lingering death did not allow her to do such important work for God as He deigned to ask from her younger sisters. In the accounts of Katherine and Sarah Russell much will be said about Elizabeth Russell, as also about the brother of whom they were so proud and so fond.

In venturing to tell the uneventful story of these Irish Sisters of Mercy, I have thought it well to link their unknown names with the well-known name of a man who, while showing himself to the end very emphatically a Catholic Irishman, played a prominent part in the public life of England in the closing years of the nineteenth century. The writer of the biography which appeared too hastily after Lord Russell's death

was acquainted only with the professional and political career of the Chief Justice, and could not be expected to give an adequate idea of the beauty, worth, and charm of his personal character. Some glimpses of the sweetness that mingled with his strength may be caught in the following account of his sisters.

Although, however, I have deemed it expedient to shelter these simple sketches under this *magni nominis umbra*, I am not without a hope that Katherine and Sarah Russell may win the sympathy of many for their own sake also, and not merely for their brother's. It was he, indeed, who, to my great surprise, when Mother Baptist Russell died in 1898, suggested that some record of her life ought to be written. I acted on the hint, publishing my sketch in the great country beyond the Atlantic in which the last forty-four years of Mother Baptist's life were spent. Of this little book only a few copies made their way to Ireland. It has been out of print for many years and is frequently asked for. With many omissions and some additions it forms the first portion of the present volume.

The second sketch requires perhaps a special apology for entering still more minutely into the domestic influences that helped to form Charles Russell's character. Some readers indeed may be a little shocked at the simplicity of several of the details that will be given. But I have great confidence in the comparative secrecy of many books that are supposed to be published. Eyes profane grow easily tired of such reading and turn away from it quickly to more congenial subjects, leaving records like the following to those for whom they are intended. For here there is nothing—to borrow some words from Cardinal Newman—nothing but "a life barren of great events and rich in small ones, a life of routine duties, of happy obscurity and inward peace, of an orderly dispensing of good to others that came within her influence, of a growth and blossoming and

bearing fruit in the house of God, and of a blessed death in the presence of her Sisters". But if I should be so fortunate as to succeed in enabling the reader to form an idea of the strength and sweetness of Mother Emmanuel's character, and of the placid and winning perfection of her life, *her* story also, though much less eventful than her brother's, or even her sister's, will have an interest and usefulness of its own.

With less misgiving I introduce to strangers the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in California. Katherine Russell resembled her brother in many of his great qualities. She was indeed "a valiant woman," of exceptional gifts, natural and supernatural, who performed with great perfection the task assigned to her by God, and who was manifestly equal to much greater toils and greater sacrifices if God had asked them from her.

The month of August in four years far apart saw the death of Charles Russell and of his mother and two of his three sisters. He died in 1900, two years after Mother Baptist and two years before Mother Emmanuel.

May the excuse put forward by Tacitus, on my title-page, for writing the Life of his kinsman Agricola obtain for me also—*talium sororum tantique fratris fraterculus*—forgiveness and perhaps a little praise and thanks. *Aut laudatus aut excusatus.*

M. R.

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PART I.

MOTHER BAPTIST RUSSELL.

PIONEER SISTER OF MERCY IN CALIFORNIA.

"A woman," answered Percivale, "a nun,
And one no further off in blood from me
Than sister; and, if ever holy maid
With knees of adoration wore the stone,
A holy maid."

Tennyson.

LETTER OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF SAN FRANCISCO.

"16 *July*, 1912.

"DEAR FATHER RUSSELL,

"It gives me great pleasure to add my testimony about your saintly sister, who laboured here so devotedly and so long.

"When Mother Baptist Russell arrived in San Francisco, 7 December, 1854, the city was small, as it had been organized only in 1849, and had the appearance rather of an overgrown village than of a settled, well-ordered city. The Catholic population was small, and very few of them were people of means. They had come here attracted by the discovery of gold and most of them were on their way to the mines. In those early days few people came to remain long. Their object was to get some portion of the wealth that was to be found here, and then return to their homes in the East. Such a population, being unstable, is not apt to take much interest in religious institutions; and, having drifted away from their old, well-ordered homes, they are apt to become very careless in the practice of the duties of their religion.

"Mother Baptist was not here long before she realized that there was a great work to be done to save this floating population to the Church, and she lost no time in beginning it. She was a gentle, calm, silent, but strong woman, who took in at a glance the necessities of the situation, and laid her plans accordingly. A hospital had to be built for the infirm; a house of protection and reformation for the erring ones of her own sex; a house of Providence for the unemployed; a home for the aged, both men and women; and above all, and most necessary of all, Catholic schools in which the children of our Catholic people, while learning the things that are use-

ful for this life, would, at the same time, be solidly instructed in the principles of their religion which would sanctify their lives while here on earth, and bring them to their eternal home after this life is over.

"At the present time, when churches and schools are numerous, it is not easy to understand the tremendous difficulties that confronted her on all sides, difficulties that would have deterred one less hopeful and less courageous than Mother Baptist Russell. She had a great work to do, and with the courage of the saints she put her hands to do it without delay. She had God with her, and with his assistance all obstacles could be surmounted. She remembered the saying of St. Teresa, towards whom she had a great devotion: 'Teresa is nothing. Teresa and two ducats are nothing. But Teresa, two ducats, and Almighty God are very powerful.' And so, although Mother Baptist and her small Community were poor, their Divine Master would see that the means needed for the work they had at heart would not be wanting. When she passed to her eternal reward, she left as monuments of her great zeal a well-equipped hospital; a Home of Providence for aged men and women; a Magdalen Asylum; a large school for boys and girls in St. Peter's Parish; a school in St. Brendan's Parish; a school in St. Anthony's Parish, Oakland, and a Retreat for the members of the Community who needed rest now and then from their exhausting labours.

"These material works would, of themselves, be sufficient evidence of the very great business qualifications which she possessed, and also of her tact and influence in bringing people to place at her disposal the means necessary for the construction and maintenance of all these institutions. The principal source of her ability to interest her lay friends in her works of charity was her deeply spiritual character. All who came in contact with her soon recognized that she was a woman of deep faith, great piety, and most affectionate love for the poor. She accomplished much because she was entirely disinterested, asked nothing for herself, nothing for personal needs or comfort, but always for others; always thinking for others, planning for others; she was in every

fibre of her being a perfect Religious. If I were to single out from her many virtues those most characteristic and prominent, I should name her obedience and her charity. The rule of her Community was the law of her entire life.

"She inculcated by counsel, and above all by example, that victory over one's self comes only to the obedient. As our Divine Master was obedient, even to the death of the cross, and hence was given a name above all other names, so Mother Russell instructed her spiritual daughters that progress in the religious life could only be attained by a strict observance of the letter and spirit of the Rule under which they had made their vows. It might seem to others who did not know her well that her government was severe, but her spiritual children forgot that she was the Superior, because her authority was applied so gently, so affectionately, that the name of Superior was lost in the more endearing name of Mother of the Community. She never issued commands, she politely and gently made requests, and her requests were always granted. The union between her and her spiritual children was perfect. She had obtained from Almighty God the gift of government, and obedience on the part of her subjects was an easy thing because it was prompted by a very deep affection.

"Her charity towards all, and especially towards the poor, was boundless; no poor person was ever turned away from her door. The care of the sick was always without compensation for those who were unable to make it. It was enough to be destitute to receive her most careful consideration. The words of the Book of Proverbs find an application in her life: 'She hath opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hand to the poor' (Prov. xxxi. 20). In her dealings with all classes of people she was the personification of courtesy and kindness, and we may apply to her again the words of Proverbs (xxxi. 26), 'She opened her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness'.

"Her voice was low, sweet, and deliberate. One always felt, when speaking with her, that she realized that words were the expression of thought and were to be used with de-

liberation. As age came on, her activities seemed to increase, and she was every day planning something new for the good of her Community, and ultimately for the good of our Catholic people; so, when the end came, it found her vigilant and working for her Lord. Death came sweetly and gently; she was conscious even to the last. It was a consolation to myself to have her recognize me and speak to me shortly before she passed into Eternity. When it became known that Mother Baptist Russell had died, the whole city seemed to feel that a great woman had gone from it. Thousands visited her bier, and the large chapel was filled with a multitude that overflowed into the street, as the last solemn rites of the Church were held over her remains.

"She left her impress on her Community. It is to-day what she made it, and her words and example are quoted as authority on all questions by the members of it. We all felt that a special blessing was left by her to her spiritual children.

"Her great devotion was to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. She was always the first to offer Him her homage in the morning, and the last to leave Him at night. She seemed to realize always that she was speaking and acting in His presence. He was indeed a companion to her during life; may we not feel certain that she is His companion now in His eternal home?

"I remain, my dear Father Russell,

"Faithfully yours,

"✠P. W. RIORDAN."

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE IN KILLOWEN.

In the first week of August, 1898, the three or four principal newspapers of San Francisco, even in the midst of the excitement of the Cuban War, devoted long columns for several days to minute accounts of the illness and death, and then the life of the Superior of the Sisters of Mercy in that city, of which she was perhaps one of the oldest inhabitants, or at least one of the earliest of surviving residents. These secular journalists did not allow a career of great public utility and great private holiness to come to an end unnoticed; but those for whom Mother Baptist Russell was more than a remarkable woman have thought that some fuller and more permanent record should be made of her works and her virtues.

Katherine Russell was the third child of Arthur, son of Charles Russell of Killough, and Margaret, daughter of Matthew Mullan of Belfast.[1] Killough is a small seaport and fishing station in the north of County Down, five miles south-east of St. Patrick's grave at Downpatrick. In that good barony of Lecale the Russells had planted themselves in the thirteenth century, and they are there still. At the change of religion under Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn these Celtic Normans did not change, but kept the Faith through all the penal days. There is at present at Killough a chalice with this inscription: "This Chalis was made for George Russell of Rathmolin, Esq., and Mrs. Mary Taaffe his wife. June Anno 1641." This George Russell was a member of the Catholic

[1] As our preface began by giving the dates of birth and death for the children of the family, we may give these dates also for the parents: Arthur Russell, 1785-1845; Margaret Mullan, 1791-1867.

Confederation of Kilkenny and was killed in the battle of Tircroghan, fighting on the Irish side.

Arthur Russell's children, however, were not born at Killough, for he had meanwhile migrated from the north to the south of County Down. He himself was born at Killough on 9 July, 1785. There were not many openings for Catholic lads in those days, and Arthur Russell went to sea, joining the merchant service and persevering long enough to become captain of a ship of his own, trading chiefly with Norway. But before his marriage (17 January, 1825), perhaps with a view to it, he had given up the sea and purchased the Southwark brewery at Newry.[1]

Newry was at that time a rival to Belfast. Though it has since been left far behind by the northern capital, it was then perhaps more than its equal in commercial advantages; and it had certainly a greater number of Catholic inhabitants and of priests. A few years earlier, the year that Arthur Russell's younger brother Charles (who was afterwards to be the President of Maynooth) was born—1812—the Rev. Wm. Crolly, afterwards Primate, had charge of Belfast parish, thirty miles long, with only one curate and one small chapel in a mean backlane of Belfast, capable of holding only about one hundred and fifty worshippers. The priests and churches within that district may now be counted by the hundred. Newry, on the other hand, was then and always the residence of the Bishop of Dromore, whose Cathedral, however, was only what is now called affectionately "The Old Chapel," the first stone of the present beautiful church of St. Patrick being laid in the very year of the marriage just referred to.

Newry is very beautifully situated in the valley (or, as it is called locally, the Low Ground) through which the Glanrye, more generally known as the Newry River, after a short winding course flows into Carlingford Bay—in that valley and on the hills that rise on either side. In this frontier town of the North, as Newry is fond of calling itself, Katherine Russell, the subject of this sketch, was born on 18 April, 1829.

[1] In John Rocque's map of Newry in 1760 the present Queen Street is called "Ballybot, otherwise Southwark".

The long fight for Catholic Emancipation had just been won by the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill on the fifth of that very month; and, when the baby was brought to her mother, she cried over her, calling her her first free-born child. Two sisters had preceded her, Mary and Elizabeth; and her immediate successor in the nursery (to the disgust of the eldest sister, who complained that there were already enough of them) was another sister, Sarah, who was followed by two brothers. Of these last the elder was to be afterwards well known as Sir Charles Russell, Gladstone's last Attorney-General in England—the first Catholic to hold that position since the Reformation.

The name that we have just mentioned will perhaps justify us in giving some particulars more minute than a sketch like this might seem to call for. For instance, in the innumerable biographical notices that have been at various times furnished of Mother Baptist's eldest brother by various magazines and newspapers, he is sometimes called a native of County Down and sometimes of County Armagh. Newry is the chief town of the former county, which at this point is separated from the County Armagh by the River Glanrye. Mr. Arthur Russell's house stood (and stands) on the Armagh side of the river. The Local Government Act has made this district for the first time a part of County Down.

It may be recorded also that the welcome "son and heir" was the first of the children born in the roomy, substantial house which Arthur Russell built for himself and which is still as fresh and hale as it was eighty years ago. It is now No. 50 Queen Street. He built also the two adjoining houses, pulling down the smaller house, in the gardens behind, which he had previously occupied and in which Katherine Russell and her three sisters were born.

For the sake of a very interesting name that is mixed with the reminiscence, we may mention that one of Mr. Russell's tenants, the occupant of the middle house of the three, was Captain Verner, brother of Sir William Verner, Bart., then a strong pillar of the Orange party; and that at the same time the chief Newry attorney, Sam Frazer, had a clever young

apprentice called John Mitchel, son of a Unitarian minister in the town. The Mitchels lived not far away in Dromalane, which is a continuation of Queen Street to the country—in the same house to which, by an extraordinary combination of circumstances, the author of "The Jail Journal" was, after many vicissitudes and twenty-seven years of imprisonment and exile, to return at last to die, 20 March, 1875.[1]

Not his death, however, but his marriage connects John Mitchel with the birthplace of Mother Baptist Russell: for her next-door neighbour, Jane Verner, a schoolgirl of seventeen summers, in 1837, married against her father's will young Mitchel, who was barely of age and still in his apprenticeship. Thank God, several of their children became Catholics, with the full consent of their gifted father, who had always high principles and generous sentiments. He was a staunch defender of the Pope. Judge O'Hagan, who was at this time a boy in Newry also, told me that Mitchel had often implied that he would become a Catholic if he could but pray.

Like this remarkable man who stole his youthful bride almost from the home that we have described, Kate Russell, the little girl whom John Mitchel must have often met in his walks in that direction, was destined also to make her way to the United States, through less stirring vicissitudes, however, and not *via* Kilmainham and Tasmania. She was a sensible, healthy child, not unpleasantly precocious, but very bright and good. "The child is father to the man," is, perhaps, more fully verified when the sex is changed. At an unusually early age Kate was presented for the sacrament of Confirmation to the new Bishop, Dr. Michael Blake. Though then at the beginning only of his Episcopal career of twenty-seven years, he was already very old and venerable looking, and he was always exact and somewhat austere; but the youthful candidate, nothing daunted, complained only of the easiness

[1] This house, in which, by another curious chance, "honest John Martin" also died a week after his friend, was afterward enlarged and beautified as the home of an eminently useful and worthy citizen of Newry, Thomas D'Arcy Hoey, whose brother, John Cashel Hoey, was Sir Charles Gavan Duffy's coadjutor and then successor as editor of "The Nation," and afterward Dr. W. G. Ward's literary editor of "The Dublin Review".

of the test to which she was subjected by him, and begged of his Lordship to propose some of the harder questions further on in the Catechism.

Fifty years afterwards she wrote: "Miss Cunningham [who survived till 1909] and I were confirmed the same day, and I can distinctly remember on the day we were examined by Dr. Blake of blessed memory that she was crying with fright and I was quite at my ease and wondering at her tears".

She had still to wait some years before she was allowed to make her First Communion, which she received in the old Chapel of Killowen in the year 1841, on the same day that the oldest of her brothers was confirmed. Dr. Blake reserved to himself the sacred and consoling duty of administering both these sacraments to the lambs of his flock. The notes I am here following state that that was the only year the "old Bishop," as he was already called twenty years before his death, came to Killowen for this purpose; all the other years the Killowen boys and girls had to make their way to Rostrevor.

But our narrative has not reached its Killowen stage. Between Katherine Russell's Confirmation in Newry and her First Communion in Killowen many things occurred. Her father's health gave way; the brewery was leased to the firm of Carroll & D'Arcy; and it was decided to seek a warmer climate in France, where the two elder girls would have special advantages for their education. These plans were upset by the sudden illness of the eldest, Mary. She died of fever in her thirteenth year, on 28 June, 1838, the day of Queen Victoria's coronation. The town was illuminated that night, and, as the house which the little corpse sanctified was in darkness, two young men stood outside to explain the cause to any loyal passer-by who might be scandalized.

This sorrow altered the arrangements, and the thought of going to France was given up.

While endeavouring to procure a small farm that might furnish some occupation and interest to the gentle paterfamilias, the family pitched their tent for some months at Rostrevor in a quaint old "bow-window" house which disappeared long ago, the site being at present occupied by the Presbyterian

Church, on your right, as, coming from Warrenpoint, you approach the rising ground on which Rostrevor stands. That was the roof that sheltered the young folk in whom we are interested on " The Night of the Big Wind " as the people still call the terrific storm that raged over Ireland and England on 6 January, 1839. This hurricane prostrated giants by the hundred all round leafy Rostrevor; and trees that had been the victims of its fury afforded delightful rides on their huge branches to a set of merry children for months afterwards, when early in the new year they finally settled down at Seafield in Killowen.

But it seems that there are at least four Killowens in Ireland —in Cork, in Wexford, in Derry, and in Down. This last is of course the Killowen of Killowens, some ten miles to the east of Newry and separated from Rostrevor by a mile of delightful roadway, where the trees of Rostrevor Wood arch over your head and the waters of Carlingford Bay sparkle down below you, almost within a stone's throw. About two miles farther on, removed from the high road to Kilkeel and Newcastle by two or three fields, and with another couple of fields between it and the beach stands the snug dwelling that was to be Katherine Russell's home during all the remaining years of what she called her life in the world.

Not that Killowen was by any means a discovery reserved for the year that began with the Big Wind. For many years before, as soon as the hot months began, the Newry children had made their way eagerly to their simple seaside home in that summer haunt of their predilection—generally Nellie Crilly's [1] roomy, substantial cottage that faces you at that corner where the road divides into two—the upper road toiling up Gilmore's Hill, long and steep; the lower road keeping to the level ground nearer to the sea, round by Killowen Point. They were therefore used to the Killowen air during many long sunny summers before they came to live there, winter and summer.

Seafield, with its compact little territory of sixteen acres

[1] She was also called Nellie Short. I do not know which of the two was her maiden name.

stretching down to the shore, was an old-fashioned, comfortable house lying in the shelter of a short range of the Mourne Mountains, between Slieve Ban and Croagh Shee, and looking over the Lough to the old historic town of Carlingford, which, with its King John's Castle, was distinctly visible from the door across some two miles of waves. A wing was added for its new inmates, and a pleasant porch, which has since disappeared, along with the gravelled sweep in front, the careful raking of which was one of the Saturday evening sounds in preparation for the holy silence of a rural Sunday.

The old chapel, which was never known by the name of any patron saint, was within a short half-hour's walk, and for some years to come it was, summer after summer, the scene of Confirmation or First Communion of one or other of the younger members of the household,[1] beginning, as we have before said, with her for whose sake these old times and places are recalled. Some twenty years later it was the scene of the Yelverton marriage, which became the subject of one of the *causes célèbres* of the century. There was one great bond of union between these newcomers and the people of the place. They were all Catholics—not more than one or two Protestant families in the whole half-parish. A great many years after, the youngest of the Seafield family, in the pulpit of the Rostrevor church, drawing, as he confessed, upon his memory rather than on his fancy, described a species of poverty which is blessed by God. This was (he said) "the poverty which does not condemn to idleness and despair and crime, but only to unceasing labour and many privations endured with resignation—the poverty that is able and willing to accept that condition which for fallen man is not a curse so much as a punishment, nay almost a blessing: 'In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread'—out in the fields, under God's sunshine and God's rain, and in the simple homesteads, where constant, cheerful toil, where honest Christian pride, where the attachments of race and home are powerful allies with religion and all her sacramental and unsacramental graces in enabling so many to practise great virtues, almost

[1] See, however, page 11. How hard it is to be perfectly accurate!

without knowing them to be virtues,—where half a parish is but as one family, all taking an interest in each other's fortunes, all taking shame in each other's faults, and thus making human respect (so often an incentive to evil) the check of passion and the safeguard of all good—where enmities and scandals are as utterly unknown as crime—where the unvarying round of duties discharged day by day, year after year, hardly leaving space for the simplest pleasures, makes of the blessed Sunday a true and a doubly welcome day of rest—where the salutary ordinances of the Church are observed with filial docility, the plain homelike chapel crowded every Sunday, and then on the great Feasts, so many gathered round the Communion-rails, though all this does not imply merely a few minutes' walk to a street hard by, but often a journey of many toilsome miles, down and up steep mountain roads in all weathers—where in these ways and a thousand others the pure strong faith of Irish Catholic hearts avows itself and points toward heaven, and cools the summer's heat, and makes the wintry blast less keen and the burden of life so much easier to bear; this is not wealth, this is not abject poverty, but I think that in the eyes of the angels this is not the least enviable of human lots; and this is, or at least used to be, Killowen."

During the whole period of this wholesome and happy life in Killowen, the children were in the care of a lady of great worth and ability, Miss Margaret O'Connor.[1] She was always treated, as she well deserved, with the most absolute respect and confidence, which I have since frequently contrasted with the "only a governess" of poetry, and also too often of the prose of real life. The most advanced of her pupils was the second eldest of the bright little band. A very strictly disciplined band it was, but as healthy and happy as possible —with a wholesome monotony of work and play varied by no more exciting events than weekday walks or Sunday drives or occasionally a climb to the top of one of the mountains above us, or a row (not a sail) to Carlingford or Greenore, or the yearly

[1] Two incidents belonging to this early stage of our story will be given hereafter towards the end of the eighth chapter. They relate to Charles Russell's sturdy boyhood.

fair at Greencastle (long since abolished). The Californian Sister of Mercy will hereafter look back to these scenes with wistful affection. Allusions to Killowen memories occur in her letters thirty and forty years later. Writing in 1892, she asks about the old woman who took care of the chapel: "Is Sally Bradley gone to her heavenly home? Will you ever forget the holly and ivy about the altar in Killowen from Christmas to March? Poor old soul, she was good and simple."

In 1844 the two eldest girls were placed in a school in Belfast; but in May, 1845, they were summoned home to the death-bed of their father, who died on the 29th of that month. May he rest in peace. The family soon after removed into their house in Newry.

Here I will follow the recollections [1] of one of the orphans—if that sad name could be given to children who were still to enjoy for twenty years more the care of the wisest and best of mothers:—

"It is now that dear Kate comes in more prominently than she has done in my recollections up to this. She was at home the comfort and resource of every one in the house. Always cheerful and equal in temper, kind, self-forgetful, thoughtful for others, helpful, untiring in her round of house duties; all loved her and looked to her in their pains and pleasures, and she had a heart for all. She was a comfortable little housekeeper, a good mender of torn garments, and she got employment especially at the stocking-basket." After mentioning sundry branches of a girl's education in which she excelled, the writer goes on: "These were all given up, as she thought she would never need them in after life; for she had made up her mind to be a nun in an Order which served the poor only. She entered with all her heart into the religious advantages our new life presented, and joined to it earnest, self-sacrificing service of the poor. Those were the dreadful famine-years, and cholera followed the famine. Our dear mother was ever foremost in works of charity, and, when a Ladies' Society was

[1] The notes from which a scrap is here given will be printed in full in the sketch of the writer of them, Mother Mary Emmanuel.

established for the clothing and relief of the poor, she was chosen president, while Kate was an untiring and most zealous member. Between visiting the sick and poor in their wretched homes, and collecting from door to door the weekly subscriptions of those who were a little better off, and also preparing her share of the clothing which was distributed to the poor, Kate's whole time was devoted at this terrible crisis to what was to be the work of her life."

I should say that it was these charitable labours that gained for her the grace of a religious vocation, if I did not believe that she was already in her heart a Sister of Mercy. Early in the year 1848, the last of her teens, she manifested her desire and begged for her mother's permission to consecrate herself to God in the religious state.

She was not, however, the first of her mother's children to choose such a vocation. Before the point that we have reached, as far back as the year 1834, an event had occurred of some importance in this little chronicle: not the birth of the chronicler—which was chiefly important for himself—but the departure from the fireside circle of the first nun of the family. Mrs. Russell, or as we should rather call her in this context, Margaret Mullan, was born 13 October, 1791, and at a very early age married a Belfast merchant, Mr. John Hamill, who was taken from her suddenly before her thirtieth year, leaving her with three sons and three daughters, for whom, however, young as he was, he had made prudent provision. One daughter died in childhood, and one son on the verge of manhood. Of the two remaining sisters, Margaret Hamill married Peter McEvoy Gartlan, a man of exceptional ability, as may be inferred from the fact that, though practising his profession as solicitor in Dundalk and not in Dublin, he was one of three chosen to conduct the defence of "O'Connell and Others" in the famous State Trials of 1844. The brilliant articles on the subject in the "Dublin Review," with vivid portraits of the men engaged in that mighty legal tournament, were from his pen. We may mention here, out of due season, that two of Mrs. Gartlan's children became Sisters of Mercy in the very beautiful and flourishing Convent

of Tipperary. James Hamill, the eldest brother, tried his fortune in South America; but though a man of good ability and blameless life, he had not much worldly success. Arthur Hamill, Q.C., was County Court Judge for Roscommon and Sligo at the time of his death, 20 July, 1886. It will hereafter be necessary to quote letters of Mother Baptist, showing her affection and admiration for this excellent man; but reference has been made to him at this point, because his other sister was, as we have said, the first nun of the household.

CHAPTER II.

CONVENT LIFE AT KINSALE.

Up to the epoch of Catholic Emancipation there were few convents in Ireland. Two or three communities had managed to keep up a stealthy existence in Dublin, Galway, and Drogheda, through all the penal times. The Presentation Nuns are a century old.

It was not these, however, nor the still more recent Institutes of Irish Sisters of Charity or Sisters of Mercy that were the first to penetrate into the Black North. The Newry Convent of Poor Clares was founded in 1830 from the Dublin Convent of the Order at Harold's Cross. Before that time the most northern Convent was the Sienna Convent of Dominicanesses at Drogheda; and it was still many a year before the Sisters of Mercy ventured to Belfast and Derry. At present they are doing their blessed work in every town, large and small, of the North, as well as of the South, East, and West.

When the Sisters of St. Clare made their home beside the Presbyterian Church where John Mitchel's father then officiated, and which, now disused, guards the grave where he himself is buried with his father and mother, Anne Hamill was only 14. She had to wait four years before joining them; but early in 1834 she left her happy home one morning, crossed the town, climbed the steep ascent beyond (called most truthfully High Street), and entered the convent gate which she never passed through again. As Sister Mary Bernard, she lived sixty peaceful years in joyous simplicity and innocence till her death, 23 May, 1894, in her seventy-eighth year.

The second nun of the family, she whose story we are telling, was only seven years old when the youthful Maynooth professor, Charles William Russell, afterwards for many years

the President of the College, preached what was probably his first public sermon at the profession of Sister Mary Bernard Hamill, in 1836. She had to wait for what at that age seems the long period of ten years before she could set about determining her vocation; and, when she was old enough to make it a practical question, she did not feel drawn to the only convent with which she was personally acquainted. One who has a right to know, conjectures that Gerald Griffin's musical and fervent lines about the Sister of Charity, that she was fond of repeating, had some share in making her at first desire to be enrolled among the Daughters of Mary Aikenhead, whom she then knew rather as Daughters of Vincent de Paul, the saint of her predilection. Her mother's wishes, however, and the counsels of the old Bishop, Dr. Blake, made her finally seek admission into the Institute of Mercy, founded by Mother Macaulay.

As the bright, affectionate, home-loving maiden was in the end to go as far away from her home as the girth of this small globe permits, so she began by going as far away as the length of this small island permits. The selection, however, of the Kinsale Convent of Mercy was due chiefly to the intimate friendship between Father Denis Murphy, the parish priest of Kinsale, and Dr. Russell of Maynooth, who was the guardian of Arthur Russell's children. Mrs. Russell paid a visit of inspection to the Southern Convent, and was greatly attracted by the Mother Superior, Mary Francis Bridgeman, afterwards prominent as the leader of the band of Sisters who nursed the sick and wounded soldiers at Scutari during the Crimean war. She was particularly delighted with the immense amount of good wrought amongst the poor, especially through the work-schools. The hard task of selling the produce of the girls' industry was from that time one of the many works of charity to which her busy days were devoted. She spared neither time nor money in order to effect sales, travelling wherever there was a friend or acquaintance that might be tempted to purchase some of the excellent plain and ornamental work produced by the well-appointed schools of St. Joseph's, Kinsale. She never spared herself, and (harder still) she did not spare

others. The only one of her letters that chances to be in my hands illustrates her capacity for this hiphiline[1] form of almsgiving, which for many is far more difficult than putting their hand into their own pocket. This letter was addressed to the Rev. Charles O'Hare, then in the first year of his priesthood. He became parish priest of Ballinahinch, and died several years ago. May he rest in peace.

"Newry, 31 *December*, 1851.

"Rev. Dear Sir:

"I cannot express how grateful we feel for your kind and holy remembrance of us, where we would most wish to be remembered, at God's holy altar. May His grace and blessing be your reward! [*Here comes in a paragraph about a Maynooth student of two months' standing.*]

"You cannot think how anxiously I looked for a letter from you about the vestments. Week after week since I saw you last, I have hoped to receive your directions to forward them to Lurgan. Perhaps, if they were really in your hands, Mr. McKay might feel bound to exert himself in disposing of some of them. He certainly did hold out great encouragement and said if they were sent to him by Mr. O'Hare, that he had no doubt but between you some good would be done for the Sisters of Mercy; for he would interest clergymen in the neighbouring diocese. It was this that made me so anxious to send them down. The bishop took the purple suit since I saw you, but I have still six very handsome suits and very moderate in price, too, considering the quality. I went to every place in Dublin about a month ago, when I was in town, to look at vestments and inquire prices: and in none of them, I honestly assure you, did I see such value.

"I wish you were in Newry to-day that you might give your countenance to my son Charles at the delivery of his essay in the assembly rooms. You heard, I suppose, that the Newry Institute, of which Charles is a member, pro-

[1] This adjective will be sought for in vain in the dictionaries. There is in the Hebrew grammar a division of verbs in *hiphil* which signify "making others do the thing in question".

posed a prize for the best essay on 'The Age we Live in, its Tendencies and Exigencies'. The prize was adjudged to him, and a request made that he would read or deliver it in public for the benefit of the Library Fund of the Institute. He could not very well refuse to comply, but I think it was scarcely kind or judicious to ask so young a lad to come before the public as a lecturer. It is too trying an ordeal, and may expose him to the charge of presumption, which, thank God, he does not deserve, for it is with very great reluctance he does so. But it is a duty imposed upon him, and I hope he will discharge it with credit. Wishing you, reverend dear sir, many happy returns of the New Year, in which I am joined by all my family, I am yours very obediently,

"Margaret Russell."

The lad of 19 years, whose first public appearance is here chronicled, has been since heard of. As I have quoted this letter before its time, I may give after its time a letter in which Mr. Arthur Russell, two or three months before his death, referred to the same boy, then only 12 years old. It is curious that this tone should be taken by both parents in the only two letters that seem to have survived. I give the whole of this simple letter for the sake of the kindness and thoughtfulness that it shows.

"Sunday, 25 *January*, 1845.

"My Dear Margaret:

"I received your joint epistles this morning, which gave me great pleasure. I find the children don't go to school until Monday. Tell them I am very much pleased with them all, and I trust they will continue to merit my approbation. Tell Charles I see a great improvement in his last note. I hope he will continue to improve. I am particularly pleased to find he has been so successful in his classes. All he wants is application, for I think he has the abilities, so the fault must be his own if he don't prove himself clever. It has just occurred to me that perhaps it might be an accommodation to Miss Whittle to get the use of some bedclothes

while the girls are with her. Besides, it will make them more comfortable, as you have them with you there. She will not be so foolish as to be offended if you would make the inquiry. Tell Lill the geraniums are in fine health. I take great care of them, and tell Kate that Sarah did not write to me yet.

"When they are settled, they need not write but monthly, unless something particular requires them to do so; it will take up their time, and it is not requisite to write oftener. They will find their time short, when it is expired. Charles will also write occasionally.

"I am, my dear Margaret,
Yours,
"Arthur Russell."

Some old man, who returned to Ireland, after all his friends and relatives were dead, was asked why he had done so. "I came back to see the mountains." Katherine Russell, when she was just getting ready to leave her home and friends, bade good-bye to the mountains. Her last summer, 1848, was of course spent as usual in dear old Killowen, and when on the point of returning to Newry to make the last preparations for her flight, she arranged with her youngest sister and youngest brother to rise very early one bright morning in August—so early that the three had climbed Slieve Ban, and had run along the topmost ridge, in the keen, crisp, bracing mountain air, which the sun had not yet had time to warm, till they were near enough to Rostrevor to hear the church clock strike six down below, and they said the morning Angelus near to the Big Stone.[1]

Soon after came the parting. One of the two who helped her to bid good-bye to the mountains wrote lately to the other: "Sadly I missed Kate on my return home. There was always something so restful, genial, and bright about her, that no one near her could keep dull or anxious long. She was thoroughly sensible, practical, and energetic, and

[1] Cloughmore, an enormous boulder on the side of the mountain above Rostrevor Wood. Legend connects it with Finn ma Cool.

never understood nursing sensibilities or humours—yet forbearing, patient, and reasonable, so that you could always talk of your little difficulties with her, when they would be sure to fade away of themselves."

In November, 1848, she entered her new convent home in Kinsale. What she thought of her new mother we learn from a note written forty years later, in which she mentions a letter just received from Newry, announcing good Mother Bridgeman's death. "I need not say pray for her, and ask Father Gleeson to please remember her at the altar. She was a noble woman and a holy religious."

The novice from the North had no violent change to make in her habits and tone of mind. Years before in a sort of spiritual conference which she used to hold with her brothers and sisters in the old Killowen home, the subject proposed by her (for she was the guiding spirit of the little association) was, "what was the best way to become a saint?" The unanimous opinion of the youthful theologians was—"to do our daily duties as well as ever we can, and to do them in the presence of God, to please Him". No doubt Kinsale was quite content with this sound spirituality of Killowen.

Sister Mary Baptist, as we may henceforth call her, was from the first particularly efficient in the schools. She had been solidly educated, and what she did not know she was quick to learn, while her quiet firmness, her clearness, and her calm judgment, gave her great power in instructing the young.

> O'er wayward children wouldst thou hold firm rule
> And sun thee in the light of happy faces?
> Love, truth, and patience—these must be thy graces—
> And in thine own heart they must first keep school.

During her noviceship, Sister Baptist had an experience that was to serve her in later years. She was allowed to tend the poor creatures stricken with the cholera; for the famine had brought pestilence in its train. She had always been remarkable for her skill in nursing and comforting the sick and dying; and with all the tenderness of her sympathy, fear was unknown to her.

When the time came for her religious profession, Dr. Delaney, the Bishop of Cork, then at the beginning of his long episcopate, deputed the Bishop of Hyderabad to receive her vows. This prelate, Dr. Daniel Murphy, was then on a visit with his brother, the pastor of Kinsale. He became Archbishop of Hobart in Tasmania, and lived to be the oldest member of the world-wide hierarchy of the Catholic Church. I question very much the accuracy of Sister Baptist's own statement about the degree of spiritual knowledge she possessed at this epoch of her life. On 11 February, 1882, some of her novices were to be professed. She was unable to be present and she sent them the following letter:—

"My Dear Sisters:

"As I cannot have the happiness of hearing you pronounce your vows, I will write a few lines to wish you all every happiness on the joyous occasion. I know you will all make your consecration with fervour, from the very depths of your heart, and I am sure dear Mother Gabriel has made you fully sensible of the seriousness of the irrevocable engagements made by the Religious Profession. I must acknowledge I had very vague ideas of it myself when I was professed; but you are all more mature in your minds and can enter into it more deeply.

"You must not now imagine that all is done. On the contrary, you are only now beginning. Hitherto you were apprentices, learning the principles and rules of religious life; now you must reduce them to practice in your daily life. Father Barchi said in one of his retreats, that religion is called by spiritual writers a 'paradise on earth,' but he thought that purgatory would be a more appropriate name. The truth is both names are appropriate. It is a purgatory, as it offers innumerable opportunities of performing acts contrary to nature, and it is also a paradise on earth, because of the peace enjoyed by humble, docile religious, who live by faith, and see God in their Superiors, and His will in all the occurrences of life.

"Our Lord assures us a hair does not fall without His per-

mission. If we really believe this, how can we be over-anxious or worried? Let us, then, leave ourselves humbly and confidently in the hands of Divine Providence, doing all we can to glorify Him by living as true religious, real Sisters of Mercy—'gentle, patient, hard-working, humble, obedient, charitable, and above all, simple and joyous'. You will recognize the words of Father Coleridge, S.J., in his 'First Sister of Mercy'. They are beautiful and include everything necessary to make us saints. The last is of more consequence than most persons imagine. 'God loveth the cheerful giver,' and it makes hard things easy, and helps others on the hard road as well as ourselves. You know, besides, Sister Mary Stanislaus grants an indulgence to every one who causes a laugh at recreation, so gain all the indulgences you can; but it is more habitual holy joy I advocate. May God bless you all.

"Ever your affectionate Mother,
"Sister M. B. Russell,
"*Sister of Mercy.*"

Perhaps it was while assisting at this final dedication of Mary Baptist Russell to the special service of God and His poor that her elder sister resolved finally to follow her example. Elizabeth Russell was allowed to enter the same novitiate that Katherine had just passed through, but only with the stipulation exacted by her Bishop, Dr. Blake, that she could return (with her dowry) to Newry when he should have arranged for the establishment there of the Sisters of Mercy. This condition also was imposed on Sister Mary Baptist, who had to be formally released from it before taking the next step in her career. Their mother at this time, in order to facilitate a new foundation in their native town, offered to make over for the purpose all her property in Ballybot; but the situation of those houses was considered unsuitable for a convent, and the offer was declined, though this, to one who had special opportunities of judging, seemed afterwards to have been a mistake, such as God sometimes allows for some wise end.

CHAPTER III.

LEADS A COLONY TO CALIFORNIA.

When the second, or rather the third, nun of the household was half-way through her noviceship, in the summer of 1854, the Rev. Hugh Gallagher of San Francisco paid a visit to his native land. He was empowered by his Bishop, a Spanish Dominican, Dr. Alemany, to bring back with him a colony of Irish Sisters of Mercy. Mother Vincent Whitty, sister to the late Father Robert Whitty, S.J. (formerly Cardinal Wiseman's Vicar-General in London), was superior at that time in the Mother House in Baggot Street, which had recently supplied so many new foundations that it had not Sisters enough for its own work. Father Gallagher was therefore recommended to apply to Kinsale, where he arrived on 28 July, 1854, with the full approval of the Bishop of the diocese, Dr. William Delaney. The Kinsale Convent was then only eight years old, having been founded from Limerick in 1846, and yet the busy hive was ready to swarm.

At that time California seemed to be much farther away than we consider it at present; and in reality it was a very difficult place to reach, and more difficult to live in. This explains the opening words of the following passage from that most interesting work, "Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy," [1] Vol. III, page 471 :—

"As the new mission was supposed to entail unusual sacrifices, the Sisters were informed that none but volunteers would be accepted. They were counselled to consider the matter well, pray for Divine direction, consult their directors and superiors,

[1] By Mother Austin Carroll who died in the Convent of Mercy in Mobile, Alabama, U.S.A., in the year 1909.

and on a given day all who were ready to go were told to offer themselves in writing and put the billets in a box at the Oratory of the Sacred Heart. Twenty-nine, almost the whole Community, offered, but Bishop Delaney would allow only five to go. The Kinsale Superior, Mother M. Francis Bridgeman, one of the grandest women, both spiritually and intellectually, that ever wore the religious habit, selected from the volunteers, with unerring judgment, Sister M. Baptist Russell, who had just left the novitiate; Sister M. de Sales Reddan, who was old enough to be her grandmother; Sister M. Bernard O'Dwyer, Sister M. Frances Benson, and Sister Mary Howley.

"To this contingent were added three novices who had the courage to offer themselves: Sister M. Gabriel Brown, Sister M. Paul Beechinor, and Sister M. Martha MacCarthy. Accompanied by Mother Bridgeman and Sister Mary Aquin Russell, the whole party left Kinsale, 8 September, 1854."

As this is a very important crisis in our story, we shall give the greater part of a letter received from one of the present Community of St. Joseph's, Kinsale, describing the incidents more minutely. The "loved old Mother" is, of course, Mother Francis Bridgeman, of holy memory.

"Mother Mary Baptist was one of our loved old Mother's most highly esteemed and best beloved spiritual children. She often said of her that she seemed like one who had never sinned in Adam, and that she believed she never allowed self-love to argue for a moment with what she had reason to know was God's will or good pleasure. This fidelity to grace, she thought, had much more to do with her remarkable calmness of manner than had her naturally sweet temper. She often watched her under trying circumstances, but could never detect a shade of disappointment or a ruffle of any kind.

"When the San Francisco mission was proposed, she asked her confessor's advice as to offering herself for it. He did not, at first, approve of her doing so, and, when she told this to Mother M. Francis, the latter looked a little disappointed, but did not wish Sister M. Baptist to notice this, and merely said to her that she had done her part, and that they must look on

her confessor's decision as God's will in the matter. Sister M. Baptist returned soon to Mother M. Francis, saying she feared she had not shown sufficient desire for the foreign missions when speaking to her confessor, and that she would be glad to see him again on the subject. Mother M. Francis, fearing she might have allowed her own disappointment to appear, and that Sister M. Baptist was about to press the matter to meet her wishes, questioned her as to her views regarding the mission. Her one desire was to do God's will, but, if she were sure it was His will for her to go on the mission, she thought she would feel somewhat more pleased than otherwise. In a second interview her confessor gave his consent, and she offered and was accepted, without, however, being informed at first that she was destined to be the Superior.

" When all the Sisters had been selected for the California mission, they were presented to the parish priest as the chosen missioners ; and he casually asked which of them was to be Reverend Mother. Mother Mary Francis replied that it was Sister Mary Baptist ; at which Sister M. B. got slightly pale, and the tears started to her eyes, but they were not allowed to fall, and when the Sisters surrounded her and offered their mingled congratulations and sympathy, she was as calm and cheerful as usual, and received all so cordially and simply that no one could form any opinion as to how the announcement affected her. When a Sister afterwards remarked to Mother M. Francis, that she pitied Sister M. Baptist and thought it must be very embarrassing to her to have her first intimation of the burden that was to be laid on her made in public, Mother M. Francis replied that it certainly was hard, and that she would not attempt such a manner of acting with any one else, but that she knew Mother Mary Baptist well enough to feel sure that she would not betray any undue feeling on the occasion. She also said that she was not sorry to have had an opportunity of trying if *anything* could move her, but that, much as she relied on her imperturbable calmness, she had scarcely been prepared for the total absence of feeling she manifested at such an announcement.

"You[1] can, no doubt, give some interesting details of the generosity shown by her and dear Sister Mary Aquin, when your good mother hesitated, for a time, about Mother M. B.'s going to San Francisco. Sister M. Magdalen says you were here at the time, and did your part bravely, too. I asked Sister M. Magdalen's own opinion of dear Mother Baptist, and she said, with tears in her eyes, 'All I have to say of her is that she was the most perfect being, in every sense of the word, that in my judgment I ever came across'.

"The same question being put to Sister M. Elizabeth, the only other survivor of those early fifties, she said: 'You know how much dear Mother M. Francis thought of her; she was so calm, so perfect, in fact, in every way, and how she used to hold her up as a model to young Sisters. But what *I* admired most in her was her cordial, affectionate manner in the Community, and her great love for the poor. She could never see a Sister in any difficulty without trying to help her out of it, even at her own great inconvenience, so that many a time she got herself into difficulties in her effort to get others out of them. As for the poor, it used to be one of my greatest ambitions to be with her on visitation, especially at the workhouse. You know the state of misery they were in there at the time, and it would touch any heart to see her trying to console them and to help them to bear their sufferings. However calm she was under her own trials, I have known her to shed bitter tears on our way home from the workhouse, at the thought of the wretchedness she had witnessed and the little she could do to relieve it. Any little extra time or freedom she might chance to have was always devoted to helping or relieving the poor in some way or other. She did many things in this way that others would not venture, and that were not always approved of, but she did them with so much simplicity and good faith that no one could blame her. She was one of the most loving and generous souls I ever met.'"

"Tell me, for you were there!" exclaimed Richard Lalor

[1] Mother Mary Emmanuel Russell, to whom this letter is addressed by Sister Mary Evangelist.

Sheil in his famous reply to Lord Lyndhurst's jibe against the alien Irish; and Sister Evangelist in the middle of the foregoing letter makes a similar appeal to Mother Emmanuel with regard to her recollection of Mother Baptist's demeanour during this trying crisis. Accordingly we transcribe the following notes of Kate Russell's youngest sister:—

"We were in Kinsale when the Chapter met to vote for the San Francisco foundation and for the Mother Superior thereof. Mother Mary Francis told us that, when the name of Sister Mary Baptist was announced as the chosen one, poor Kate was entirely unprepared for it. She started, then bowed down her head for a moment, and, when Mother M. Francis saw her face, there was not a trace of emotion or excitement, but only its usual calm, sweet expression. So accustomed was she to regard the will of a superior as the will of God in her regard, that she never dreamed of remonstrance but simply bent her will to God's, no matter what effort it cost her. This is what Mother M. Francis said of her."

This well-qualified witness goes on to mention, that, as Father Gallagher was obliged to return to America in a few weeks, the preparations of the little band of missioners had to be hurried on. She and her mother were allowed to be with Sister Mary Baptist constantly. "During all that time Kate was as calm and collected as if leaving her convent home were a matter of everyday occurrence. Once only did her great self-control break down, and that was one day when the two Nuns, our mother and myself, were busy drawing out a quantity of tangled silk, I began to read for them some verses you had sent me from Maynooth, in which you recalled the old place in Killowen, and the family circle there, and since then the way that all were scattered, leaving me behind alone. It begins:—

> In the dim uncertain twilight
> That the close of evening brings,
> I sit in my lonely chamber
> And think of many things, etc.

"While I was reading, I saw Kate's head droop a little and a tear steal down her face—then, just for a moment, she bent

with her face on her hands on the table, and, when she raised it again, her face though wet with tears, wore its usual calm, sweet expression. None of us noticed her emotion, and the work we were at went on without a word about it." [1]

As Mother Baptist is now leaving Kinsale for ever, we transcribe the page of the convent register which relates to her :—

"Sister Katherine Russell, in religion Sister Mary Baptist Joseph, daughter of Arthur and Margaret Russell, of Newry, County Down. Born in 1829. Entered the Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, St. Joseph's, Kinsale, on 24 November, 1848. Received the holy habit 7 July, 1849. Made her religious profession 2 August, 1851.[2] Offered for the Californian Mission, on which she was sent as Mother Superior on 8 September, 1854."

In making arrangements for the voyage, Father Gallagher met with a happy disappointment. He had wished to sail in the "Arctic," but he could not secure sufficient accommodation for all his party, eighteen in number, including some Presentation Nuns. He therefore deferred their departure till 23 September, the eve of the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy. The "Arctic" sailed without them and was lost with all on board. Dr. Silliman Ives, who had been Protestant Bishop in the United States, and had become a Catholic, had his luggage transferred from the ill-fated "Arctic" to the "Canada" in order that he might have Father Gallagher's company; and thus, still more narrowly, he and his wife escaped.

Those who can turn to the graphic pages of the work we have already named, "Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters

[1] This poem, which is called "Retrospection," has on account of these associations been included in the volume "Idyls of Killowen : A Soggarth's Secular Verses." In the foregoing extract, "her usual calm, sweet expression" is mentioned twice, for no other phrase could describe so well Mother Baptist's habitual demeanour.

[2] In a letter, dated 2 August, 1893, Mother Baptist begins : "This day forty-two years ago, myself and that fervent soul, Mother Liguori O'Dwyer, made our profession. She is dead many years; may she rest in peace."

of Mercy," will find a somewhat minute account of the voyage to New York, reached on the first Friday of October, and then the voyage to Greytown, the journey across the Isthmus of Panama, and finally the voyage on the Pacific in through the Golden Gate. The contemporary letters, written after their arrival, are not found in the large collection in our hands. I remember that one of Mother Baptist's expedients for employing usefully the enforced leisure of travel was the vigorous study of Spanish, to qualify her for her new surroundings, then much less thoroughly Americanized than they are now. The band of missionary Nuns had left their old home on the Feast of Our Lady's Nativity, 8 September ; they reached their new home on 8 December, which was not only the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, but the very day on which Pius IX, amid the assembled bishops of the world, solemnly defined and promulgated that dogma of our faith. Our Blessed Lady plainly had the Sisters in her safe and holy keeping. This happy omen was, of course, adverted to at the time and the memory of it cherished every year since then. Thus on 7 December, 1895, Mother Baptist wrote to the compiler of these notes: "We are in California forty-one years to-morrow, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and the day Pius IX proclaimed it a dogma of our faith. Dear old Mother de Sales threw a miraculous medal into the mud as we drove from the steamer to St. Patrick's Church, and begged our Blessed Lady to take us under her protection ; and no doubt she preserved us from many dangers, notwithstanding our shortcomings."

San Francisco was then in its raw beginnings. Its present Archbishop, Dr. Riordan, told Mother Baptist that, when he made his first Communion, there was but one Catholic church in Chicago where there were at the time that he spoke sixty-four churches. The progress of San Francisco was probably still more rapid in some respects, if not in the matter of churches : for Mother Baptist, reporting Archbishop Riordan's observation in a letter, remarks that San Francisco had not then half as many churches as Chicago, even including the convent-chapels. But when she first

drove to St. Patrick's on Market Street, there were only two other churches in the place, St. Francis' in Vallejo Street and an old adobe church in the Mission Dolores, then a suburb, now absorbed into the city. The Cathedral was opened, though still unfinished, some weeks after the arrival of the Sisters.

But surely this religious accommodation was wonderfully ample when we are reminded that the town of San Francisco could hardly be said to be at that time ten years old. The name indeed of San Francisco de los Dolores had been given to the territory in 1776 by the Franciscan Fathers who succeeded the Jesuit Missionaries after the suppression of the Society; but the hamlet itself was called Yerba Buena, till about the year 1846, when a man-of-war took possession of it for the United States. Before 1848 San Francisco, as it had begun to be called, had only three hundred inhabitants; but in that year the gold mines were discovered, and the population increased suddenly month by month to 2000 and 20,000. The figures given for the year 1850 are 34,000; for 1860, 56,800; for 1870, 149,470; for 1880, 233,900; and in 1885, 275,000. Later figures are not at hand; and we need only add that in the Presidential election of 1884 10,000 of the 12,800 who had once been British subjects were Irish—which is an indication of the strength of the Irish element in the population. Evidently by that time there was a fine field for the labours of Irish Sisters of Mercy.

CHAPTER IV.

BEGINNING OF THE MISSION IN SAN FRANCISCO.

Things were in a crude state when they began their mission. Fifty years later, writing in April, 1896, Mother Baptist mentions that fresh eggs (then twenty cents a dozen) were three dollars a dozen when they had first to buy them. A grimmer trait of those primitive times is the statement that we have seen in a San Francisco newspaper that between the years 1849 and 1856 a thousand homicides were committed in the little city, and out of these there were only seven convictions.

Dr. Alemany and his priests received the Sisters most kindly. "From the first," wrote Mother Baptist, "we felt that we had a saint to deal with in the Archbishop." He appointed 12 December as his first day to celebrate Mass for them, and they wondered how he had fixed on the anniversary of the foundation of their Order, which was a feast of the first class for them; but they found that this date was also the greatest of the Mexican feasts of the Blessed Virgin under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

January 2, 1855, they established themselves in a small house in Vallejo Street, near the county hospital.

By degrees Mother Baptist quietly and prudently undertook the various works that were most pressingly needed, especially the nursing of the sick and the education of the young. The rapidly rising town was then very unhealthy, and cholera (introduced by a ship "Uncle Sam," 5 September, 1855) wrought dreadful havoc amongst the inhabitants. Mother Baptist used with great effect her recent experience of that terrible plague in Ireland. She and her Sisters went fearlessly into the overcrowded hospital, and their heroic charity at once

secured for them the love and respect of the people. One of their newspapers, "The Daily News," wrote as follows:—

"We visited yesterday the patients in the hospital: a more horrible and ghastly sight we have seldom witnessed. In the midst of this scene of sorrow, pain, anguish, and danger, were ministering angels who disregarded everything to aid their distressed fellow-creatures. The Sisters of Mercy, rightly named, whose convent is opposite the hospital, as soon as they learned the state of things, hurried to offer their services. They did not stop to inquire whether the poor sufferers were Protestants or Catholics, Americans or foreigners, but with the noblest devotion applied themselves to their relief. One Sister might be seen bathing the limbs of a sufferer, another chafing the extremities, a third applying the remedies, while others with pitying faces were calming the fears of those supposed to be dying. The idea of danger never seems to have occurred to these noble women; they heeded nothing of the kind. If the lives of any of the unfortunates be saved, they will owe their preservation to those noble ladies."

The dreadful epidemic not only opened the doors of the hospital to the Sisters, but installed them there officially. On fixed conditions they assumed the entire control of the institution, 24 October, 1855. Of course there were many outbursts of bigotry, met by the most favourable reports from the Protestant physicians and all who were qualified to judge, but, when the sick of the County Hospital were transferred in July, 1857, to North Beach, the municipal authorities did not invite the holy and devoted nurses to accompany them. The Sisters rented the vacated premises from the city, changing the name "State Union and County Hospital" into "St. Mary's Hospital". Their work prospered, and they were obliged to seek a larger house, which was found at the meeting of First Street and Bryant Street.[1] Here St. Mary's Hospital has

[1] The curt American way of giving this address on envelopes suggested the following quatrain to Mother Baptist's biographer:—

The best of all possible matches, they say,
Are those manufactured by Bryant and May;
And of possible Convents by no means the worst
Is the Convent located on Bryant and First.

gradually grown in extent and in the completeness of its equipment until to-day it stands a noble monument of the courageous and persevering zeal and energy of its foundress.

Father Slattery of Marysville, who preached an eloquent sermon at the laying of the foundation-stone of St. Mary's, died of typhoid fever a month after, under the care of the Sisters in the old hospital. It was Father King who chiefly collected the funds for building the hospital. Indeed all the priests helped the Sisters most generously, and very few of the letters home, especially in the early years, failed to express Mother Baptist's gratitude to her reverend benefactors. Naturally her Jesuit brother was duly informed of the goodness of his religious brethren. "God bless the Jesuits" is a phrase that frequently occurs in her letters. Some of these had been fellow-travellers on that memorable journey from the Empire City to the Golden Gate, which ended on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1854. The Fathers of the Society seem to have been at first absorbed in the work of education. They soon established their college at Santa Clara, which has since developed so nobly. Yet can the author of "Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy" be quite accurate in stating that not for some months but "for the first few years there was only one Jesuit in the city, Father Maraschi?" "Nevertheless," she adds, "they (her Californian Sisters) never missed a Retreat, and their Retreats have always been conducted by Jesuits." Many years afterwards, as late as July, 1896, writing to her sister in Newry, Mother Baptist remarks apropos of certain sudden deaths: "Those two Jesuits[1] in 'The Irish Monthly' went unexpectedly. I think the one who went calmly to the Rector and asked to be anointed as he felt death at hand had a most enviable end. What a sweet faith and conformity of will he manifested! Our first Jesuit friend here, good Father Maraschi, now very old, is almost blind, but manages to do a great deal."

The truest friend, however, to the Sisters was to the last

[1] Evidently Father Denis Murphy, who died 18 May, 1896, and Father Carton, who died on the fifteenth of the preceding month, both in the manner here described. May they rest in peace!

their first friend, the first Californian priest they had seen, the ambassador from the New World who had invited them to "fresh fields and pastures new," though even Father Hugh Gallagher was rivalled by his reverend brother, Joseph, in quiet devotion to their interests. Very fitly Father Hugh was chosen to preach at the funeral of the Sister who, out of this little band of holy emigrants, was the first to emigrate to the newest world of all. One is almost surprised to find that the oldest of the community was the first to die, for death seldom follows a chronological order, and mourners have often complained, like a bereaved parent in one of Gerald Griffin's ballads,

> That death a backward course should hold—
> Should smite the young and spare the old.

Mother de Sales Reddan was the aunt of Mother Francis Bridgeman of Kinsale, to whom, as to other nieces and nephews, she had taken the place of their mother. She had founded the Good Shepherd Convent in Limerick, which has now done glorious work for souls for more than fifty years. As soon as she had placed this and her other works of charity on a permanent basis, Dr. Ryan, the Bishop of Limerick, allowed her to depart, and she placed herself under her niece at Kinsale, the most docile and humble of novices. Her zeal and spirit of perfect detachment prompted her, as we have seen, to make further sacrifices and to go from World's End[1] to the ends of the earth at what seemed to her youthful companions quite a venerable age, for she was more than twice as old as her Mother Superior in San Francisco. She caught a fatal cold in July, 1857, while travelling by steamer with Mother Baptist to establish their first branch at Sacramento City. Her youthful Superior wrote of her thus, not when her loss was recent, but many years later:—

"I never met any one more forgetful of self or more zealous for souls. I have seen her with clasped hands and tears

[1] This is the name given to a cluster of fishermen's cottages on the shore near Kinsale; at least it was so called in August, 1854, when the writer climbed up the Stony Steps to bid good-bye for ever to the subject of the present sketch.

coursing down her cheeks, praying for some poor hardened sinner. She felt we had a grand field for our labours in this country, and her gratitude for being assigned to such a mission was unbounded. I never could tell you what she was or describe the impression she made on all with whom she came in contact. She is remembered and spoken of still, after the lapse of so many years, and you know how short her career in California was—not quite three years. I did not mind so much the feeling manifested at the time of her death. It was so sudden that it created a sensation by that circumstance alone. Besides, she was the first religious that died in San Francisco, or even in California. But I do really feel astonished when some circumstance causes her to be mentioned, and I see how vivid is the remembrance of her words and actions. Even Archbishop Alemany, who seemed a regular stoic in his way, more than once alluded to her with real feeling."

Long before its time the curious circumstance may be noted that, as Father Hugh Gallagher preached at the obsequies of Mother de Sales, the first Sister of Mercy buried in Californian soil, so Father Hugh Gallagher preached at the obsequies of Mother Baptist herself more than forty years later. But in the latter case it was a Jesuit nephew and namesake of the good old man who had died long before.

I once heard a good mother pray that all her children might die before her; and the motive of this strange wish was that she might have a share in securing for each of her dear ones the supreme grace of a happy death. Mother Baptist prayed no such prayer with regard to the original band of Sisters whom she led out to the New World; but, as a fact, she helped them all through their last passage into the newest world of all—all of them except one. Sister Mary Howley survived her; but now she too is gone.

Sister Mary's experience, therefore, goes back to Mother Baptist's noviceship. This good lay-sister ought to have been summoned earlier as a witness. Here is a portion of her testimony:—

"When I entered the convent, Reverend Mother was in her

nineteenth year. She had entered in November, 1848, and I in the following May. When I saw her first, she had fair hair, dark eyebrows, and rosy cheeks, and looked beautiful. While she was a postulant, she taught the novices, but she was always very humble and made nothing of it. She was ten months a postulant, Mother Francis Bridgeman having been called away to Limerick on account of the cholera. Mother Francis had always great confidence in her. Even in the noviceship she used to try to excuse the Sisters, and Mother Francis pretended not to like it, though she afterwards acknowledged that she admired her for it. She would say in such a nice, sweet way, 'Now, Mother, Sister did not mean it that way,' etc. Charity was her favourite virtue. She could never see a fault in anyone. She could never blame anyone. 'There was a little fault, perhaps, but a great deal of good to cover that.' I was young, but I thought her an example to the world. She was so humble, and all her family were the same. I never saw an imperfection in her, and I always felt as though she were related to me. I am sure I gave her a great deal of trouble, but she was so patient with me. When I would commit an imperfection, she would say, 'Well, dear, if you did not commit that, there would be no imperfection, and then we might become proud.' She was a religious according to God's own heart, and all that a Sister of Mercy should be. That is the reason Mother Francis sent her out here. I saw Mother McAuley, and she always reminded me of her. She had a practice of always invoking the Holy Ghost in everything she undertook, and I am sure was always guided by His Spirit.

"There was a foundation in Clonakilty in question before the California foundation, and Mother Francis had her in her mind as the Superior of it, but she did not know it. Father Hugh Gallagher then came to Kinsale to apply for a foundation for California. Mother Francis did not at first approve of it, and it was unsettled for a while. She had heard some strange stories about California, and feared the Sisters would be scalped, and would not give her consent to let any of her children go. There was a young man, a lace merchant, who

happened to call at the convent after leaving California, and she questioned the young man about the laws here, and how everything was. He told her that the law was that every law-breaker was punished according to what he deserved. This relieved her, and she afterwards felt more at ease. Father Hugh told her that the Sisters would have a convent when they arrived. She discussed matters with him, but did not agree with him on some things, so it was postponed. He then came to her and told her that she was going against the will of God and interfering with the salvation of souls if she refused to give the foundation for California."

Sister Mary then goes on with a part of the story that we have had before, about Sister Mary Baptist's appointment as leader of the little missionary troop. "Then her mother came, but she said no—she had let her go far enough and could not let her go any further. Reverend Mother prevailed on her, and brought Sister Mary Paul, and Sister Mary Gabriel, a novice [a bright young girl, Sylvia Brown, belonging to a highly connected family of County Limerick] into the parlour, as well as the others who were going; and this touched Mrs. Russell, and she gave her consent." Sister Mary ends this part of her narrative with the remark: "Rev. Mother was like her mother, who was a fine business woman".

It will be best to give continuously the rest of Sister Mary's "deposition," though it takes us beyond the point that we have reached and attributes a sort of prophecy to the present writer:—

"After coming out here, I was very lonely, and I used to fret a great deal, but Rev. Mother would shake her finger at me with a sweet smile. When I would look at her working and scrubbing, I would feel ashamed of myself, and say, 'She is a fine lady and see what she does, so why should I complain?'

"We arrived here on 8 December, and went to stay with the Sisters of Charity. At the end of the year we made our Renovation Retreat, and Rev. Mother herself gathered a few sticks and made a sweet little crib for ourselves. We were as happy as it was possible to be.

"When we were really poor in the hospital, we did not have very many fine beds, and Rev. Mother used to sleep in a little place at the head of the stairs. She waited one day until we were at recreation, and went and hauled the hair mattress which she had downstairs, and gave it to a poor man who had only a straw bed. She arranged his bed with her own mattress. I found that she did this, and I told Bridget Kennedy, and she went to Rev. Mother's cell, and found a piece of carpet stretched on the cot to take the place of the mattress. She then got her another mattress, and wrote 'Rev. Mother' in big letters, so that she could not give it away again.

"She was kindness itself in her visitations to the sick. One time she heard of a poor family, and when she went there she found the poor woman lying in bed in consumption. Her husband was away. When Rev. Mother saw the distress, she came back, and went over to the Home, and took all the dresses, shirts, etc., she could get, and also went to the Infirmary drawers and took sheets and tunics, etc. She did this so often that they had to lock the Infirmary drawers on her. They used to tell her she would never make a poor man's wife, as she would have him robbed, at which she always laughed. On the day I was speaking about, she went supplied with what was necessary, and when she got there, put on a tin of water to heat, washed the poor woman, and got her comfortably settled in bed. When this was done, she took the little ones one by one and put them into the tub of water and washed them, and dressed them with new shirts. The last little one she had no shirt for, so she took a napkin and cut holes in it for sleeves, and fixed it around him and wrapped him in a comforter. She used to go and visit this family and help them nearly every day. She loved the poor. There used to be a crazy woman, and she used to go to her cell and say, 'I want to get into your bed,' and Mother would get up and put her in, not thinking that anyone knew it, and would stay around her. She loved to make her happy even for a couple of minutes.

"We were always happy and united. It was like a

heaven upon earth. Of course we suffered a great deal after coming here, but Mother would insist on doing all the drudgery. She would often stay at home and do the hard work, and send M. M. de Sales, Sr. M. Bernard, Sr. M. Gabriel, and myself to the Hospital, from nine in the morning till six in the evening. She used to put her apron on, tuck up her habit, and do all the cooking, cleaning, and scrubbing. She was a model of humility.

"After her visits to the Asylum, the penitents would say, 'Didn't Rev. Mother leave peace after her? She made us so happy'. She was very fond of them.

"At one time Father Russell was giving the Sisters a retreat in one of their foundations, and Sr. Veronica was appointed to wait on him. When he heard she was from Kinsale, he asked her if she knew Sister Mary Baptist. She said, 'Father, I do indeed, and I could write a book about her'. She did not know that she was speaking to her brother, and she afterwards wrote me about it. He then remarked, 'Well, I may one day write a book about her'. They idolize her memory in Kinsale. After being out here, her appearance changed a great deal, so that when she went back to Kinsale, one of the Sisters asked her, not knowing her, 'When will Mother Baptist come to visit us?' She became so dark, they did not know her, and told her she had turned into a Yankee. She seemed to possess every virtue. She would humble herself to ask the opinion of others, and make one feel ashamed. She was the same to every one, and if there was any exception, she was more tender to the poor and afflicted. When one would go to talk with her, it was almost like going to Confession. You would come away light-hearted. Whatever she said you would look upon as sacred. I never remember seeing her in the least angry. She was servant to the servants, and according to God's own heart. She would sometimes be displeased with me, but she would come back and make it up with me again, showing that she had entirely forgotten the fault. Oh, I owe my perseverance to dear Rev. Mother. She was so patient and kind with me. If you committed a fault, and some one would

speak of it to her, she would be careful never to mention the name of the person from whom she received her information. She was so careful on all points of charity, and had a charitable construction to put on every one's actions, at least attributing it to ignorance, or saying that there was certainly no bad motive in doing it. I could not say enough about her. Every one loved her."

CHAPTER V.

HER MOTHER.

Father Ignatius Grant, S.J., remarks somewhere that of all saints the letter-writing saints are the most popular; and Cardinal Newman has said that a man's life and character are best known from his letters. Exception might be taken to both statements, though they are substantially true within certain limitations. Engrossed as Mother Baptist was in business of various kinds through all the moments of her crowded days, she considered it a duty and an excellent exercise of zeal and charity to keep up intercourse by letter with her kinsfolk and her religious Sisters, especially in Newry and Kinsale.

The letters sent home during the early years of the Californian mission seem to have disappeared. The Sisters were already five years at work in February, 1860, the earliest date I can find. The young Reverend Mother writes then to her own mother whom she addresses to the end in the old childlike fashion as

"My Dearest Mamma:

"It is nearly two months since Mr. O'Connor delivered your fine collection of letters, also the 'Life of Mezzofanti' and the pamphlet by dear Charles.[1] I must thank dear Arthur, Margaret, Matthew, etc., etc., *through you*, as I cannot write to themselves. I sent on your letters to

[1] Probably "The Catholic in the Workhouse," published by Richardson of London and Derby, just after Charles Russell had been called to the Bar. The "Life of Mezzofanti" was the very learned biography of the famous Polyglot Cardinal by Dr. Russell of Maynooth. It has been adopted by Italian scholars as the adequate and classic account of that marvellous linguist.

Columbus by next mail. You must not be displeased, as it pleases the poor creatures there so much to hear all the particulars. I have not got a reading of Uncle Charles' book yet, as it has been borrowed by some of the priests. Poor Uncle Charles seems doomed not to enjoy the quiet of college life very long. I hear that he is surely to be Bishop this time. Mrs. Rose Kelly, whom I have often mentioned, was quite interested in dear Charles' articles on workhouses. She is a matron of a large lunatic asylum about one hundred and fifty miles from this in a town called Stockton since the 1st of last June. She often tells us she will see our people yet, as she intends, please God, to visit the old sod once more. She has on an average one hundred and sixty female lunatics; and there are fully twice as many men. It is quite a remarkable fact that, though the population of California is for the greater part Catholic and Irish, there is quite a small proportion of either in the asylum, the effect of *religion*, of course.

"We are going on here, thank God, as usual. We hope, too, that 1860 will surely see our building pretty far on. The contract for the brick required was duly signed on the 2nd of this month. Our good Mother wants to signalize all her Feasts by something propitious. Sister M. Francis sends you her love and desires me to tell you *I am very good.* I tell her you know that already. Dear Sarah is now in her second year; please God, she will be professed this time twelve months. I have hardly left myself room to send love to all. I would wish to begin with yourself. I send you my fondest love, dearest mamma, a thousand times, and I hope your love makes you pray and pray over and over for me and mine. To Arthur, James, Margaret, Anne, Mary, and all the little ones, also to Aunt Anne, Kate, Elizabeth, and all my dear uncles my love.

"I remain, dear Mamma, your affectionate child in Jesus Christ. "Sister M. B. Russell."

Mother Baptist alludes in the foregoing to her youngest sister as having joined her eldest and being now half-way through her noviceship as a Sister of Mercy. When the second

half thereof was nearly completed, she refers to her again in less respectful terms. Writing to the same correspondent on 9 March, 1861, she remarks that letters posted in Ireland in January had reached her the day before; and this she considers wonderfully quick travelling for the mails. Nowadays they would make the journey in quarter of the time.

"That little rogue, Sister Mary Emmanuel, is to be professed on the 8th of next month. Just think of her writing but once to us since she entered! We are half-inclined not to pray one bit for her unless she writes to beg our prayers in the meantime."

The infrequency of the Newry novice's letters was not due to any indifference of hers towards her exiled sister. At that very time she was longing to share her exile. She had perhaps made up her mind as to her vocation as early as her elder sisters; but their departure had left her alone with her mother, from whom it seemed hard to demand this additional sacrifice. She always intended, however, to go out to San Francisco as soon as she could be spared; and even when Mother Catherine O'Connor, the first Superior in Newry, and Sister Mary Aquin persuaded Mrs. Russell to let her youngest daughter enter the newly founded convent of her native town, Sister Mary Emmanuel did so with the intention of going out to Mother Baptist when a fitting opportunity should offer. "In those days such opportunities [she writes] did not often occur; and, as my time of profession drew near and no chance of getting out seemed likely, I had to content myself and remain where I was, though the wish was ever present to my mind, not so much for the affection I always felt for dear Kate as because there was no one for whom I have ever felt the same reverence and dependence."

If Mrs. Russell did not send another of her daughters to Mother Baptist's aid, she largely assisted more than one Irish maiden to make their way for this purpose to the Golden Gate. At the beginning of 1861 the new hospital in San Francisco was approaching completion; and it was considered best, in furnishing it, to deal directly with the English manufacturers of the different articles required—a measure of doubtful prud-

ence even in those far-off days when the resources of San Francisco were so poor compared with her present all-sufficiency. Mary Baptist asked her mother to invest in this manner a few supplementary hundreds which she was able to allot to her dear exile in the final settlement of her affairs which she made about this time when she felt that her *Nunc dimittis* must be near. She discharged this commission with her usual thoroughness, travelling to the various English towns where the articles necessary for the equipment of a hospital were manufactured, and sparing no fatigue or expense till all the enormous crates and bales had been safely shipped to California about the beginning of 1861. To her too great exertions may be attributed a stroke of apoplexy which fell upon her soon after, and nearly proved fatal. She recovered, however, but she never was the same again. This was the perfecting grace that closed her energetic and most useful life. Her last six years were but a lingering death. Her patience, unselfishness, and self-control never forsook her. There was never a murmur or complaint—always easily pleased and ready to enjoy a visit from one of the Sisters, for it is pleasant to record that the good mother who had given away all her daughters most cheerfully to the religious state received more care and comfort from them to the last than if she had selfishly urged her counter-claims when the message came to them, one after the other, "The Master is come and calleth thee" (John xi. 28). Mrs. Arthur Russell was allowed, as a special benefactress of the Newry Convent of Mercy, to spend her last four years in a house that formed part of the convent premises, "the old convent". And so it came to pass that the sacrifice she had made in giving so many of her children to God's special service was rewarded by a happy and peaceful death-bed surrounded by nuns who loved and revered her, and among them two of her own daughters, though her death took place at so early an hour as half-past three o'clock a.m., of 29 August,[1] 1867. She was in her seventy-sixth year. May she rest in peace.

[1] The Convent Annals, in recording the death of "a most generous benefactress," add: "Her munificent donations have already been alluded to,

It is strange that the following note, which reached the next day the pretty little town of Newtonbarry, where the Faithful Companions of Jesus had just finished their annual retreat, should have survived so long :—

"Thursday Morning, 29 *August*, 1867.

"My Dearest Matthew :

"Our dear, dear Mother has left us without a struggle, like a baby sleeping, she went so calmly—with Reverend Mother and many of the Sisters praying round her—at 3.15 o'clock this morning. Since I wrote last, she seemed to suffer very little. She was so very patient, thank God for His wonderful mercy and love to her all through her illness. She had every comfort and consolation. *You* can do more for her now than any of us, and *will* do it, too. Your good priests will remember her also.

"There are many letters to be written, so excuse my short one to you.

"Your loving sister,

"Mary Emmanuel."

Another of the watchers beside that death-bed refers back to it in the following letter nearly three months later :—

"Convent of Mercy,
"Rostrevor, 13 *November*, 1867.

"My Dear Matthew :

"Long have I been wishing to spend half an hour talking to you on paper ; so, dear Matthew, this is a selfish gratification for me. I hope I may give you even a little bit of pleasure. I know nothing of you at all, and would not be sure you were in Limerick, were it not that Mother Francis Bridgeman mentioned to me in a recent letter that you had paid her a flying visit during her stay in that far-famed city. She thought you looked *old*. Did she tell you Kate is expected over from San Francisco in spring? The letter which states

but besides these she bestowed many kindnesses that could not be enumerated. Her generosity was not confined to this convent : other convents and other Orders profited by it, and her hand and her purse were open to the poor and needy."

this, is, I believe, to our dear departed mother. I was staying in Newry lately, having been a great invalid since I saw you. I am only now recovering and that very slowly. God knows what is best for us all. Often I would fain have written to ask your renewed prayers for me. I do not wish nor pray to be well, but I want to be a cheerful, edifying sufferer; or I should say more correctly, I desire to suffer in the spirit my Lord and Spouse wishes me to suffer. I don't know when I was so ill, and oh! how I dreaded losing patience! Our mother's example was ever before me. Matthew, such a mother as ours was! What silent, enduring patience! No one would suppose she had any pain, and oh! if you had seen the bleeding, bruised back, and if you knew the sleepless, agonizing nights and days she passed; and her constant request was that her children might not know what she was enduring lest it should pain them. Her daughter and a religious, and so different my spirit! This was harder on me than all. Dearest Matthew, I thank God we have you our mediator at Calvary, through the Holy Mass. This is now my greatest comfort. Pray very, very much for me. You know what I should be; implore this great grace for me. It is so encouraging in pain either of mind or body to be assured we have strong advocates in our hour of need. I am writing just as I think, not waiting to make this a connected epistle. You don't mind that. [Then after two pages asking prayers for the wants of other people, the holy, unselfish soul went on.] This is surely a selfish letter, but such it must be. We have nothing strange here except a new curate, and a French Sister of Charity over from Liverpool, attending a sick gentleman in the village. You may be sure this is a nine days' wonder. Dearest Matthew, with gratitude and thankfulness to God for having a brother a priest, believe me your own loving sister,

"Sister M. Aquin Russell."

In her interesting notes which will be given in full when we come to the youngest of the three sisters, Sarah Russell dwells with tender emphasis upon the fine character and ability of her father because she knew that her father ran the risk of

being ignored, whereas her mother could not fail to be brought forward prominently in any account of Mrs. Russell's son. It is a pity that the opportunity did not occur which was once planned for him to enable him to pay a filial tribute to his mother. At Charles Russell's second visit to the United States he was unable to repeat his long journey to the Golden Gate. Mother Baptist was disappointed, as she explains in a letter to him dated 7 July, 1896. "You will be amused to hear that I had calculated on making a little money by your visit. I know that, if you came, there are thousands would wish to see and hear you, and I did not intend they should do so without paying for it; the proceeds to be turned over to the Building Fund of Our Lady's Home for the Aged. I thought to suggest as a subject the wise, good mothers of ancient and modern times, even pagan, and of course the noble Jewish and Christian mothers, winding up with a few loving words on your own grand and good mother. I thought the subject would be appropriate and touching as well as useful in this country, where I must acknowledge it is not generally to be found. But I was counting my chickens too soon. Well, some other time, please God."

But the other time never came. It hardly ever does. Let us seize our opportunities as they occur. They will not give us a second chance.

CHAPTER VI.

HER ELDER SISTER.

"Like father, like son" is less true than "like mother, like daughter". Mother and daughter are more closely and constantly united in the tender, impressionable years of childhood; and the mother has more unceasing opportunities of moulding the disposition and manners of her little girl. The striking similarity of character in dissimilar spheres of duty, which proved Mary Baptist Russell to be her mother's daughter, may be pleaded as an excuse for so long a digression from the story of the first Californian Sister of Mercy; and we trust that the interest of a very attractive personality will excuse a further digression that we are about to make in order to link the name of her elder sister, the writer of the letter last quoted, with two or three bits of literature of which she was the inspiration. On the authority of Lady Gilbert herself—she was then Rosa Mulholland—we claim for Sister Mary Aquin (Elizabeth Russell) the distinction of having been the original of the nun who figures in one of her most exquisite tales, for which Dickens himself chose the name of "Hester's History," and which ran through a twelvemonth of his famous weekly magazine, "All the Year Round". Here is the way in which the novelist describes a convent parlour and her beloved friend and kinswoman, Sister Mary Aquin, whom she here transfers from the patronage of the Angel of the Schools to that of an earlier Doctor of the Church:—

"The room into which Hester was shown had brown panelled walls and a brown panelled floor. There was a large vase of lilies and roses, a full-length statue of Christ blessing the little children, an alms-box with its label 'For

the Sick and Dying Poor,' a table covered with a plain red cloth, an inkstand bearing writing materials, a few books. The windows were already open, and there was not one speck of dust about the place. It shone with cleanliness, it smiled with cheerfulness, it gave one Good morning! out of all its corners. By and by the handle turned: there was a little rustling as of fresh linen, a little rattling as of heavy beads; the door opened, and the 'Mother' appeared. Here were sweet, tender, pitiful blue eyes, and a brow smooth and serene under its spotless little band; no latent fire, no lines to show where frowns had been. The face was oval and softly moulded, and very winning in its exquisite freshness and purity. The mouth was mobile, and, though ever quick with a right word, was yet, in its changing expressions, most eloquent of much that it left unspoken. The complexion was so dazzling fair, so daintily warmed with its vermilion on the cheeks, no paint nor powder could mimic it; only early rising, tender labours, never-ceasing and perpetual joy of spirit, could have combined in producing it. The quaint black garment, the long, floating veil, and narrow gown of serge, were right fit and becoming to the wearer. They laid hold of her grace and made their own of it, while she, thinking to disguise herself in their sombre setting, wrapped the unlovely folds around her, and shone out of them, as only the true gem can shine. The shadow that the black veil threw round her face made its purity almost awful, but made its bloom and simplicity the more entirely enchanting. Not the satins of a duchess, not the jewels of an empress, could have lent half such a fitting lustre to this womanly presence of the gentle Mother Augustine, of the daughters of St. Vincent, in the old Convent of St. Mark."

There are many still whose memory will recognize this as a faithful picture of Sister Mary Aquin. We have already mentioned that, before her novitiate in Kinsale was completed, she returned to Newry to assist Mother Mary Catherine O'Connor in establishing a Convent of Mercy in her dear native town. Her profession was one of the first occasions on which the people of Newry heard a voice that was to in-

ROSTREVOR CHURCH AND CONVENT, CARLINGFORD LOUGH

struct and delight them for a score of years—that of the holy Dominican, John Pius Leahy, who had just been appointed Coadjutor to the venerable Bishop of Dromore, Dr. Michael Blake. The old Bishop, on 14 April, 1856, wrote to Father Patrick O'Neill, who had been chiefly instrumental in bringing the Sisters of Mercy to Newry. This admirable priest was then spending a well-earned holiday in Rome. "I feel great pleasure, because I am sure it will give you joy, in assuring you that God has been pleased to bless the labours you underwent here in founding the Convent of Mercy with so many marks of His Divine favour and approbation as I would have considered in the beginning almost incredible. Miss Russell's profession on the Tuesday after Dominica in Albis, and the Right Rev. Dr. Leahy's instructions and influence, have added powerfully to the zeal and exertions of the Rev. Mother Superioress of that community. Within the last two or three weeks postulants have been received into it, and on this day two postulants have applied to me. We lamented, at the commencement, that we would want subjects for its duties; our difficulty now is to have cells enough for their reception, and commodious schools, and, above all, a decent and neat, if not a fully becoming chapel, for the Sisters and inmates."

The best wishes of the old Bishop for his new convent have long since been fulfilled. It has meanwhile, year by year, done an immense amount of good; and it has in its turn sent out colonies to Lurgan, Rostrevor, Warrenpoint, and Bessbrook, the first of which has already, out of its abundance, bestowed the same grace upon Cookstown. Of these the branch house at Rostrevor was Sister Mary Aquin's peculiar work. The beautiful little convent, which is sheltered under the holy shadow of the church-spire that rises grandly over leafy Rostrevor, was built chiefly through her heroic exertions.

One of her devices for this purpose, as an earlier page of this book has told us, was to pre-engage long beforehand the first sermon of her Jesuit brother who spent the two years after his ordination in France where he could not venture

into a pulpit. It chanced that, when he returned in July, 1866, some difficulty had occurred about the panegyric of St. Ignatius in St. Francis Xavier's, Dublin. Father Edmund O'Reilly, the learned, the holy, the amiable, who was Provincial of the Society at the time, pressed the returned exile to fill the gap. It was a temptation to be allowed to speak for the first time as a priest in filial praise of the glorious champion of the Church at that tremendous epoch when the cry first thrilled through her startled ranks, "Ignatius to the rescue!" But I succeeded in resisting the temptation in order to be able to say a month later in the pulpit of the beautiful new church at Rostrevor that that was the first of God's temples in which I had dared to lift my voice.[1]

Sister Mary Aquin's usefulness certainly did not end with the breakdown in her health which was partly due to her excessive labours in procuring funds under very great difficulties (as we have said) for the completion of the convent at Rostrevor. For many of her last years her work was chiefly the exceedingly hard work of giving edification by brightness and unselfish cheerfulness during chronic ill-health, though she was ingenious also in utilizing every moment of the enforced leisure of an invalid. It was at this time that another picture of her was drawn in verse by the same artist who has already described her in prose:—

I see a convent gray—
  It standeth above the town;
It looketh from the distant way
  Like a monk in his faded gown.

The town is older and grayer
  That sitteth below its feet;
And sin, and pain, and sorrow, and care,
  Are dwelling in every street.

Dwelling in every street,
  Yet hurried from place to place,
As the Sisters go with their burden sweet,
  Bread, and comfort and grace.

[1] This sermon is given in the appendix, because it intimately concerns the subject of these pages.

In a nook of that convent gray
She dwelleth, my tender Saint;
Sweeter her face than I can say,
Nobler than word can paint.

Her wimple is white as milk,
Her robe is coarse and spare;
And never a lady in gems and silk
Looked half so grand and fair.

Her mind is a river of light,
Her heart is a well of love;
But none may look on her soul so white
Save only the Lord above.

That soul's most rapid flame—
The soul of my tender Saint—
It wasteth sore her beautiful frame,
And maketh her body faint.

She stayeth her eager feet,
And goeth not oft to the town;
But up in her window, lone and sweet,
She sitteth, and gazeth down.

O crowded, sad gray walls,
O people who dwell within,
Little ye know of the tear that falls
Day by day for your sin!

Her town is her nested dove—
She huggeth it close and dear;
She wrappeth it round with motherly love,
She watcheth with motherly fear.

They turn, the godless men,
They turn their steps and they come;
They know not why, but they come again,
As this were their childhood's home.

They turn with willing feet,
The foolish wife and maid;
They have no fear of the lips so sweet,
That preach but never upbraid.

They come, with blushing face;
And they come, with tearful eye;
And one hath sorrow, and one disgrace,
To whisper when none are by.

And kneeling close to her knee,
They catch her fire, I ween;
And, burning strangely and holily,
Are not what they have been.

She hath them all in her heart,
It is deep, and strong, and broad—
And well I know with what loving art
She talketh of them to God.

These beautiful lines are called "My Saint". One day that the young poet was walking with her beloved Saint in the tiny garden that lies between the church and the convent of Rostrevor, the nun's thin, white fingers plucked a rose and gave it to its namesake. That evening two or three lines were scribbled with a pencil on a scrap of paper, without any thought of their being shown to anyone, even to the giver of the rose; yet here they are after so many years:—

God bless the dews that fed, the winds that rocked thee,
Wee rose divine!
God bless the holy hands that kindly plucked thee,
To press in mine.
God love the loving heart whose love is in thee
Laid up for me,
And may her sweet and sacred counsels win me
Eternity!

After linking true poetry with the saintly and gentle memory of Sister Mary Aquin, there is bathos in adding that she was before a homelier poet's mind when he exclaimed:—

May God be blessed, with all my soul I cry,
For giving elder sisters! Who as they
Can soothe and chide us, guard and purify,
Discreetly scold, and then good-humoured play,
Mother and sister both, so grave and yet so gay?

And she also was one of

—those fair angels, saintly, wise, light-hearted,
Whose smile made pure the very air I breathed,
And who at parting—for we all have parted—
Sweet, sanctifying memories bequeathed.[1]

[1] See the opening poem of "Vespers and Compline: a Soggarth's Sacred Verses". The preceding lines are from "The Irish Farmer's Sunday Morning" in my "Idyls of Killowen: a Soggarth's Secular Verses".

The following is a summary of Sister Mary Aquin's religious life. She returned as a novice from Kinsale to help to found the Convent in Newry, 26 June, 1855; was professed 26 March, 1856; appointed Mistress of Novices 12 June, 1862; Mother Assistant, 1864; placed in charge of the new convent in Rostrevor, June, 1865; and in Rostrevor, after many years of patient suffering spent chiefly in Newry, she died 1 August, 1876.

And here I will make an abrupt and perhaps untimely appeal to the reader, when he feels greatly impressed by the vast and various amount of good wrought day by day, generation after generation, through such an institution as the Convent of Mercy in Newry, not to let his admiration and his gratitude be confined to the devoted nuns who carry on the blessed work with such courage and perseverance, but to give their due share of praise and thanks to the laymen who make such lives of devotion possible by the zealous labours and sacrifices that are involved in the original foundation of every convent. For instance, in Newry, before Elizabeth Russell returned to her native town to be its first Sister of Mercy, a committee of professional men, merchants, and others had been organized by that admirable priest, Father Patrick O'Neill, who did great work for God in Newry before taking charge of Rostrevor and Killowen, with which his blessed memory is identified. I have been allowed to examine a huge vellum-bound parish book which records the proceedings of sundry committees appointed to carry out various projects for the good of religion in Newry. These are the names of the gentlemen who for many years organized the collection of a fund for establishing a Convent of Mercy: Joseph Lupton, Andrew Jennings, Michael Denvir, Dominick Daly, Dr. Savage, Stephen Ruddy, Arthur John Small, Peter Murphy, George Guy, Andrew Gavan Daly, Joshua Magee, J. McCann, Felix O'Hagan, J. Campbell, John Linton Vallely, Francis Carvill. Out of this list, as I transcribe it, there is, I think, only one survivor; and only one or two are still represented in the population of Newry. In the preliminary list of subscribers the only feminine names are Miss Anne Reilly and

Mrs. Arthur Russell. The Convent Annals give abundant reasons for the remembrance of these two names.

If we have strayed away from Sister Mary Aquin, we should have her warm approval for doing so. No one appreciated more earnestly the goodness of good people "in the world," as the religious phrase puts it. She had a great influence over young people. When Thomas D'Arcy Hoey and other young men were away in the shooting season and sent home game to be distributed among their friends, the list was likely to be headed by "Mother Aquin". .

In the lingering sickness of her last years she bore her cross gracefully and cheerfully, using all available means, natural and supernatural, for preserving habitually a brave and bright resignation. Her chief natural alleviation of pain and weariness was reading. The good and holy Bishop, Dr. Leahy, wisely told her that in her sickly state light reading was as necessary as the medicine ordered by the doctor. She mentions this in one of her letters to her dearest friend in order not to scandalize her by asking for illustrated papers. "When people become as useless as I am, they are thankful for anything that enables them to be cheerful and preserves them from giving disedification."

I have just spoken of her "dearest friend". But when God gave to her friend a still dearer and more useful friend, she showed no jealousy but thanked God for this new mark of His love for one whom she loved so dearly. She wrote on some Easter Tuesday: "How much God must love and care for you, Rosa dear, since He has bestowed such a friend on you as Mrs. Atkinson! Every time a letter or other circumstance gives me a nearer knowledge of her inestimable character, I am filled with more and more gratitude for the tenderness that the Sacred Heart has shown towards you. It seems as if she had been modelled specially for yourself, for she has apparently everything to satisfy your heart, mind, and soul."

I wish I could find room for more of her letters. For "the letter is of all forms of writing the most intimate, revealing emotions, moods, and events at the actual moment of

their occurrence while feelings have all their first poignancy and facts their original clearness of outline. The letter is the half-way house between speech and literature."[1] One thing that Sister Mary Aquin's letters would go far to prove would be that her heart was tender and loving as ever. Among the unfounded delusions that many outside the Catholic Church harbour regarding various points of her doctrine and discipline there is hardly any more ridiculously untrue than the notion that a religious vocation hardens the heart, dulls the affections, lessens the love for kindred and friends. It has an effect directly opposite. None are less liable than nuns to the reproach that St. Paul levelled against certain pagans, that they were *sine affectione*. Sister Mary Aquin's heart was wrapped up in her friends. Congratulating one of them on having a green spot in her Dublin home where she could practise a little gardening, she went on: "That pleasure has passed away for me with many others. I would not be able to stoop now; but I have innumerable pleasures still; no one, I think, ever had more, thank God. I love to think of my friends and relations. In my eyes none are like them, and I thank God for them often."

But we have lingered too long with the sweet spirit of Mother Baptist's eldest sister. Her *prolixitas mortis* came to an end, and the welcome Angel of Death summoned her at last on 1 August, 1876, in the forty-ninth year of her age. Her happy death occurred in the branch convent she had worked hard to establish; and this is the reason why Rostrevor is not mentioned gratefully with Newry, Warrenpoint, and Killowen in this fragment of one of the last letters that she ever wrote:—

"I still continue to get pigeons, wild-fowl, grapes, jellies, etc., from kind friends in Newry and Warrenpoint; and sundry presents of fresh eggs, butter, apples, and flowers from the kind people in Killowen. I mention this to show the goodness of the people of what is called this wicked world. Somehow we are better to every one than we are to God; and still He is not jealous, but seems to inspire an increase of

[1] Mr. F. S. Boas.

charitable acts to each other, passing over Himself, being satisfied that what we do to the least of His brethren, we do unto Him."

The letter last quoted spoke of the visit that Mother Baptist was then expected to pay to her native land. A correspondent from the Convent of Mercy, Clonakilty, had exclaimed: "What a happiness it will be for Sisters M. Aquin and Emmanuel to see Mother M. Baptist again!" But one of these two was not to see her again on earth.

CHAPTER VII.

HER BROTHER.

A soul that, watched from earliest youth,
And on through many a brightening year,
Had never swerved for craft or fear,
By one side-path, from simple truth.—Tennyson.

It will not be an irrelevant interruption of the story of Mother Baptist's labours if something is told here about him who was in two ways responsible for her "Life" being written. Lord Russell of Killowen was the first to suggest it, and the chief excuse for publishing it is that she was his sister and worthy of being his sister.

In order that they may not run the risk of escaping the reader's eye through having less vivid reminiscences placed in front of them, I will begin abruptly with some notes which Lady Gilbert (or, to give her the name that in this context is more appropriate, Rosa Mulholland) has jotted down at my request. She intended me to edit them ruthlessly in weaving them into their place; but every other reader will prefer to have them in their unstudied sincerity. The first sentence was the last to be written.

. . . . . .

"You know how handsome he was, with his clear, penetrating eyes, noble forehead, framed in crisp chestnut curls; tall, well-set figure, with fine shoulders and poise of the head. His was an extraordinarily bright, strong presence, attractive and lovable; high ideals and high standards always in evidence, giving an impression of natural power to dominate the world. At the same time he had a happy, sanguine temper, was fond of a bit of fun, loved the light of humour, especially when it

discovered the hidden seamy side of equivocal things; and he had thunder and lightning in reserve only for anything wrong or mean.

"I remember him going about, singing snatches of sea-songs, or songs of some kind of high endeavour, reciting passages from Shakespeare, or from the Sacred Scriptures, calling the attention of young ones to beauty and grandeur of language, urging them to learn poetry by heart, and to cultivate what he called the 'critical faculty' bearing on such expression of intellectual thought or feeling. The first long poem I learned by heart ('The Cross in the Wilderness') was learned at his desire and recited to him as a lesson. He loved the poems of Thomas Davis. I remember walking with him against the breeze, along the Killowen Mountain, repeating for him the noble stanzas, 'Sweet and Sad,' for which he had a particular admiration.

"'Tis sweet to climb the mountain's crest,
And run like deerhound down its breast.
'Tis sweet to sniff the taintless air
And sweep the sea with haughty stare;
And sad it is when iron bars
Keep watch between you and the stars;
And sad to find your footstep stayed
By prison wall and palisade.
But 'twere better be
A prisoner for ever,
With no destiny
To do or to endeavour—
Better life to spend
As martyr or confessor
Than in silence bend
To alien or oppressor!

Another day I remember when he lay on his back on the grass on the top of Carlingford ruined castle, reading from a bundle of old 'Nation' newspapers which he treasured, as containing much of the literature of the '48 period. Among many laments for the death of Thomas Davis he particularly liked one by an anonymous writer, of which I can recall only the lines:—

"Not even to save the rare cargo of truth
Would he cast out a part to the storm.

"In the early days of his London life in Earlscourt Gardens the first baby, the first little Lily,[1] gave him extraordinary delight. He would sit beside the cot with his books or papers, often stopping in his reading to take long looks at the baby face, or to touch the mites of hands with a sort of reverential wonder. I remember him in this tender mood lying in the grass in the garden behind the house, the baby on a pillow beside him, and thoroughly enjoying thus his Saturday afternoon, or other hours of leisure. This, you know, was the child beside whose little coffin he sat all night on board the steamer that carried his first-born to Ireland to be buried in the old Newry graveyard."

. . . . . .

I think it will be best to follow up at once these very intimate personalities with another glimpse of the *vie intime*, the private life of a very public man. The following notes were written for me very reluctantly by Lord Russell's third daughter, Mary, to whom he wrote this holy letter on the eve of her profession as a nun in the Convent of the Holy Child Jesus at Mayfield in Sussex. The letter is dated only three months before his death :—

"Royal Courts of Justice,
"27 *April*, 1900.

"My Darling Child :

"God's Will be done! You have now taken the first serious step towards final retirement from the life of the world. The thought that it makes for your happiness and that it is the Will of God softens the blow to your mother and to me—for blow it, beyond question, is to us, blow it is

[1] She died in her fifth year, and was the inspiration of "Little Angels : a Book of Comfort for Mourning Mothers". She was the only one of ten children taken away in childhood ; and the only one that has followed her as yet is her eldest brother, Arthur, who died in 1907. He had adopted his father's profession and was a County Court Judge. Lord Russell is now represented by four sons and four daughters and by nineteen grandchildren.

also, I know, to Lily (who has borne herself like the brave girl she is) and to Margaret also.

"We hoped, selfishly in part, no doubt, but not wholly selfishly, to have your sunshiny nature always with or near us in the world—a world in which we thought and think good, bright souls have a great and useful work to do. Well, if it cannot be so, we bow our heads in resignation. We know you will do your duty, as it comes to you to do, well and thoroughly and unselfishly; and we have no fear that you will forget us. After all, it is something for us, poor dusty creatures of the world, with our small selfish concerns and little ambitions, to have a stout young heart steadily praying for us. I know we can depend on this; I know also you will not forget your promise to me, should serious misgivings cross your mind before the last word is spoken. I rely on this. God keep and guard you, my darling child, is the prayer of your father,

"Russell of Killowen."

Five years later Sister Mary St. John wrote to me as follows from her beautiful and happy convent home at Mayfield:—

. . . . . .

"I am ashamed of having said so often that I would write this, and never having done it. But really, though I have so much of him in my mind, I find it very hard to put anything on paper. I do not think that I would attempt it for anyone but *you*. To you who knew him so well, what I say may help to call up some old ideas. That is the only use you will find it.

"A word from him always had more effect on me than many from anyone else. I remember well when I was about twelve years old, and was in disgrace for something—I cannot now remember what—being sent by Mother to him in the Library at Tadworth. He was sitting writing, and when I went in he put down his pen, and said very gravely, 'Your good Mother tells me'—I do not think he said more than that. I know I burst into tears, and promised immediate reformation. I tell you this as an instance that I valued his good opinion

above that of anyone else. I always felt him to be so *right* in all he thought and did, and his judgment was more to me than all the world's. So it is still. I often find myself asking, 'What would Father think or say about it?' and anything of which he would disapprove, I know I am safe in disapproving.

"He had a very spiritual side to his character, had he not?—in spite of his externally absorbed life; and he was so humble. That is a quality with which I am sure people who knew him less well than you and I did would not credit him; but he certainly had it. He liked us all to give him our views of things about which he knew much and we very little, and which he liked discussing with us as though we could have told him a great deal. Lil and I always used to agree that we never felt witty or intelligent except when we were talking to him. I remember telling him that once, 'You know, Father, we tell you a story and you are so amused, that we are led to think that the next person we meet will be the same; but our story never has such success again!'

"I am doing just what you asked me to do, that is, writing just what suggests itself without any attempt at arrangement. My very earliest recollection of Father 'all to myself' is when I was nine or ten, and was staying at Waterloo, near Liverpool, with Uncle Willie. Father sent a clerk to fetch me up to Liverpool that I might 'hear a case,' which was my ambition. That scene is so fresh in my mind, and the sweet way in which he devoted himself to making me enjoy the proceedings. I was ensconced where I could see him beautifully. I know the case was about two boats that had run into each other, and, as he spoke, he had two little model boats on the desk in front of him which he moved into different positions. I felt so proud of him. How often I have done that since!

"We saw so little of him in his busiest day that every little piece we did get of his company was precious, and vacation time at Tadworth was his and our happiest time. He was always well and in good spirits there.

"I was with him in Paris during the Behring Sea Arbitration, and what an enjoyable time we had! The sittings only

occupied the mornings, and in the afternoons we used to have such delightful drives and excursions in and about Paris. He always used to tease me about having been to dinner at the Foreign Office there, and being asked by the gentleman who took me in what my ideas of the 'Salon' were. I told him candidly that I thought all the pictures there frightful except a few lent from England, by Burne-Jones—and to my horror I saw a few minutes later by the card in front of him that he was 'Le Ministre des Beaux-Arts'. How often Father has made me tell that story against myself, and each time he used to laugh as though he had never heard it before.

"How well I remember the day he took his seat in court as Lord Chief Justice! We all had places in a little gallery quite near and overlooking the Bench. He came in, looking so grand—very pale and grave, and his voice was so earnest and solemn, as he said the words of the oath—'Without fear or favour, affection or ill-will'. I don't know if I have got them quite right, but they always seem to me descriptive of his own dealings with every one at all times.

"I have been lately reading the 'Life of Father Kerr, S.J.,' which tells how, when his father, Lord Henry Kerr, died, his sister wrote him a letter in which she asked him if it was not a grand thing that they could look back on every moment that they had known their father, and that there was not one in which they were not proud of him. I don't remember her exact words, but her idea is just mine of my own Father.

"May I, before I die, be what a daughter of his should be!

"Do forgive such a disconnected production. I have done what I could to please you; but you know what a vain thing it is to put on paper anything like what our hearts are full of."

. . . . . .

I will at this early stage of our story add little of my own to the testimony of these two very competent witnesses just cited. Something may be said of Charles Russell's career hereafter when it is over. One of the tributes paid to him then was from the brilliant pen of Mr. Augustine Birrell, Q.C., whom we hope to quote more fully, but at present only this

phrase: "Charles Russell was, I expect, a strenuous person from the very beginning".[1] I am able to support this conjecture by first-hand testimony which goes far to show that he was a very strenuous and sturdy little Christian in his mother's arms. The little nursery maid who had charge of him during his first year (which began 10 November, 1832) was fond of telling thirty or forty years later how "her heart was broke with him," and how one day the baby was so unmanageable that in despair she brought him into the room where his mother was sitting, laid him down on the floor beside her, and ran home. I do not know how the crisis was settled, but Kitty Murray must have returned to her allegiance, for she died, an old woman, long afterwards, still in the service of the family.

A greater distance than the interval between their birthdays separated Charles Russell from his younger and only brother, who was less active, less manly, and had different tastes. But strong and sturdy as he was, he never bullied, he never teased, and he took good care of his little brother when there was need.

I will link his early years with his mature years on one important point. I thank God, that, with all his boldness and vigour, I never saw or heard him as a boy do or say anything wicked or even coarse, anything that would grieve a tender sister or mother. And at the end of his life similar testimony was borne by Mr. Edward Dicey in the "Fortnightly Review," October, 1900:—

"One result of his religious training should be fairly noted. He was a man whose life had been passed amidst men of the world, belonging as a rule to a class amongst whom a certain

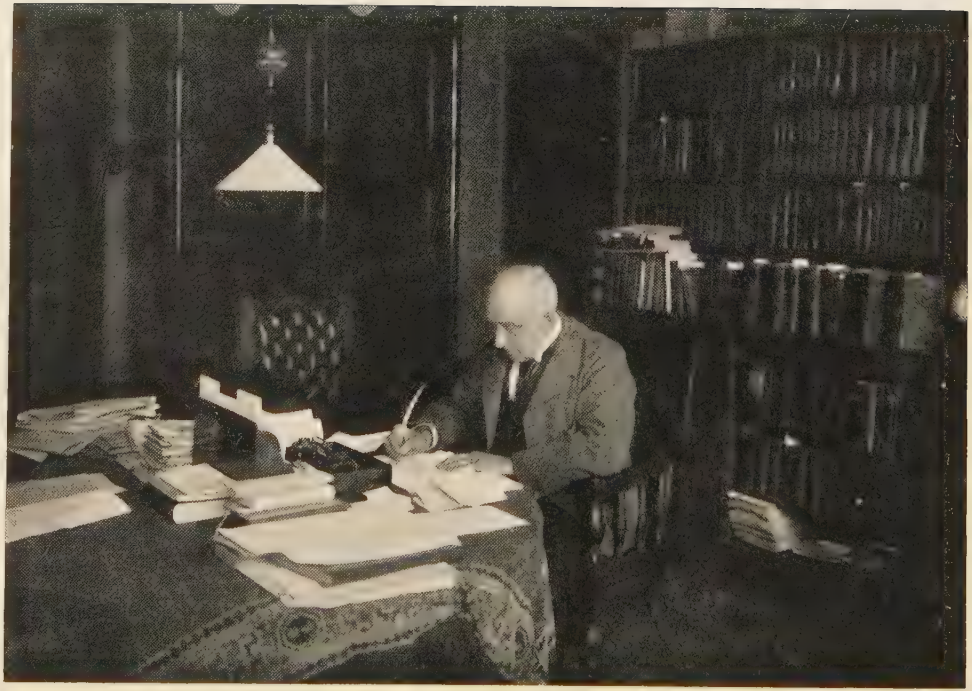
[1] What Sir William Harcourt said of Gladstone might be said of Gladstone's last Attorney-General in all the stages of his career: "Whatever he believed he intensely believed; whatever he wished he greatly wished; whatever he wrought he strenuously wrought". I apply to him also these lines from an anonymous poem, "Renunciation," in "Frazer's Magazine," Vol. LXXX, p. 348 (1869).

> "He never learned to fail, he fell before no foe.
> More than he sought he won: God has made some men so."

freedom of language is habitual. Yet, without any pretence of setting up a higher standard of morality than his associates, his conversation was at all times exceptionally free from offence. In as far as my observation went, the sort of stories told in club smoking-rooms and at bar messes always met with a reception from Russell which did not encourage their repetition; and though he was by no means squeamish in his language, he carefully avoided all talk which even lay on the borderland of impropriety. In the course of a chequered life I have known many men whose conversation was void of offence, but then they were not, as a rule, men who had lived in the society in which Russell by the exigencies of his position and by his tastes had necessarily passed the greater part of his life. I always attributed his distaste for loose conversation of any kind to the influence of religion, which had taken a strong hold of his mind from the days of his early education. I was the more impressed by this peculiarity from the fact that Russell was so emphatically, in all other respects, a man with all the tastes, ideas, convictions, and prejudices of a strong, vigorous, manly nature, and with nothing of femininity about him unless it were an almost womanly kindness of heart."

As in this point, so in many others, the child was father of the man. For instance, the following estimate of him as a boy held good all through his life. When he came home for the summer holidays from St. Vincent's, Castleknock, in July, 1847, I remember that the only name upon his lips was "Dick Irwin"; and he often in his after years expressed his interest in his old schoolfellow. In return Colonel Irwin [1] of Rathmoyle, County Roscommon, gave this as his boyish impression of Charles Russell: "He seemed to me to have great confidence in his own powers, without any trace of presumption or self-sufficiency, but with a very resolute determination to make the most of his undoubted abilities. Though full of courage and spirit, he was not quarrelsome, and I do

[1] He died in 1910. The Rev. Henry Irwin, S.J., Wimbledon College, is his son.



LORD RUSSELL OF KILLOWEN, IN HIS STUDY

not think he ever wilfully annoyed or offended any of his companions, by whom he was universally liked."

In one of the preceding pages Sister Mary St. John has claimed for her father the gift of humility. She was right. He was humble. Colonel Irwin has just told us that there was not a trace of self-sufficiency in the self-confidence of his boyhood; and this union of courage with humility was his characteristic to the end. He had the good sense to know how far his powers and his acquirements went, and to be very ready to receive help in what lay beyond. He was exceedingly docile in adopting hints and suggestions, even on very important occasions. This point might be illustrated in connexion with his great speech during the Parnell Commission; but at present we are thinking rather of the early formation of Charles Russell's character, and the following incident seems to me to be a striking proof of his humility and good sense, for humility is good sense supernaturalized. Though he was my senior by nearly two years, and far more than two years ahead of me in maturity and knowledge of life, nevertheless, because I had been allowed to spend a longer time over Latin and Greek, he became my pupil during my summer holidays, took lessons from me at a fixed hour every day, and went through one of Cicero's speeches under my guidance. This appears to me to have been an exercise in solid humility.

I do not know what poet said, or to whom he said it:—

> Cœpisti melius quam desinis; ultima primis
> Cedunt: dissimiles hic vir et ille puer.

This elegiac couplet is utterly inapplicable to Charles Russell. The continuity, the consistency of his character and temperament was remarkable. Another early tendency preserved to the end was what Mr. Edward Dicey, a friend of his last years, calls "his great taste for journalism". I distinctly remember a conversation with my brother in my first Maynooth vacation, the summer of 1852, in which he said that the position he would most desire would be that of editor of a good weekly newspaper, such probably as "The

Spectator" was or soon became under R. H. Hutton. Sixty years later I came across a "parallel passage" in Moneypenny's "Life of Disraeli," Vol. I, p. 256, where Disraeli takes a note of a long conversation with Lord Lyndhurst. "He said that, if he were to choose a career *now*, it would be at once editor and proprietor of a first-rate newspaper." To a certain extent the young Irishman put his theory into practice: first, as an amateur occasionally in Belfast in Denis Holland's "Ulsterman," and secondly in his first year at the English Bar in Henry Wilberforce's "Weekly Register" as an addition to the scanty income, not of a briefless junior (for such he never was) but of an unknown beginner. All this careful writing helped him to attain that capacity for correct, grammatical, and consecutive speech which I have often seen contrasted with the slipshod, stammering language with which even prominent lawyers are too often fain to be content. At the first meeting of the Irish Literary Society in London after his death, Sir James Matthew said that "Lord Russell was not only a great orator, but he had great literary ability, and, if time had been given him from other pressing avocations, he would have had a high place among the writers of his time".

But we have leaped from the beginning to the end. We had said that at the beginning of his professional career he had never been a briefless barrister. In the article mentioned a little earlier Mr. Birrell said in his pleasant way: "The number of Liverpool solicitors who all gave Russell his first brief is quite phenomenal". They ought to yield to the claims of Mr. John Yates who was certainly the best friend of the young Irish barrister. In the admirable sketch of Charles Russell's career and character given in the eleventh edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" (Vol. XXIII, p. 807), Sir William Rann Kennedy, Lord of Appeal, speaks of him at this crisis as follows:—

"Except some valuable introductions to friends in London and Liverpool, which were given to him by his uncle, the president of Maynooth, Russell brought to the work of his profession no external aids. He had to rely upon himself.

But the equipment was sufficient. A well-built frame; a strong, striking face, with broad forehead, keen grey eyes and a full and sensitive mouth; a voice which, though not musical, was rich and responded well to strong emotions, whether of indignation, or scorn, or pity; an amazing power of concentrating thought; an intellectual grasp promptly seizing the real points of the most entangled case and rejecting all that was secondary or petty or irrelevant; a faculty of lucid and forcible expression, which, without literary ornateness or grace of style, could on fit occasions rise to impassioned eloquence—all these things Russell had. But beyond and above all these was his immense personality, an embodiment of energetic will which riveted attention, dominated his audience, and bore down opposition."

But we have strayed far enough for the present from Mother Baptist Russell and her hard work as a Pioneer Sister of Mercy in California. Let us return to the Golden Gate.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN CHARGE OF THE SMALLPOX HOSPITAL.

When Mother Baptist had completed the long term of office[1] allowed to a Foundress, in May, 1867, she ceased to be Superioress and became Assistant to the new Reverend Mother, Mary Gabriel Brown ; but after the shortest interval allowable, namely, three years, the burden of "superiority" was laid upon her once more, as it was again and again in precisely similar circumstances until the end.

This first break was considered a proper time for the execution of a project which seemed to many of the Community useful and even necessary—namely, that Mother Baptist should visit Europe and Ireland for the purpose of getting more suitable postulants, who were by no means numerous in this newest of the United States. But the Bishop of San Francisco, Dr. Alemany, held very strict and very wise views as to the general inexpediency of such journeys, and the idea was abandoned. Mother Baptist was called, as we have already said, on the first opportunity to fill again a double term of office, from 1870 to 1876 ; and, when in the latter year she was again free from those responsibilities, the project of a pilgrimage to Europe was revived, but it was not carried out until nearly two years later.

Before, however, we accompany Mother Baptist on her one visit to the Old Country, we must find room for some particulars belonging to an earlier date. In the summer of 1868 there was a terrible outbreak of smallpox in San Francisco. The Sisters of Mercy offered to take charge of the

[1] "Six years by appointment and then the two triennials allowed by the Constitution," says the author of "Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy," who adds: "To the great grief of her subjects she would not accept a dispensation from Rome, which they unanimously desired".

patients in the Smallpox Hospital, and the offer was eagerly accepted. One of the Protestant newspapers paid at the time this tribute to the devoted services of the Sisters: "It was almost with a feeling of shame for Protestantism that we saw, the other day, when the continual complaints of mal-administration and neglect of patients at the Variola Hospital in this city seemed to be without remedy, none of our religious denominations save the Catholic Church had any organization which could furnish intelligent help—competent, intelligent, kind, female nurses to enter that home of misery and take charge of its ministrations to the crowd of suffering humanity it contains. Those devoted Sisters of Mercy willingly presented themselves and entered on a mission of charity from which all others shrink in dismay and affright. That their presence there will have a beneficial effect none can doubt. Already the good results of their presence are apparent. Their fearless, self-sacrificing love is an honour to their Church and to their Order."

This was during the three years' interval after Mother Baptist's first long term of office as Mother Superior; and she took advantage of her private station to claim the post of danger in the Smallpox Hospital. It was there that she wrote the following letter to the Rev. Patrick O'Neill, parish priest of Rostrevor, one of the holiest and most zealous priests that have ever sanctified the Church of Ireland. He was a true and devoted friend of the Sisters of Mercy, whom he was mainly instrumental in establishing in Newry and afterwards in Rostrevor. The half parishes that Mother Baptist speaks of were Killbroney and Killowen:—

"Smallpox Hospital,
"San Francisco, Cal., 27 *March*, 1869.

"Dear Rev. Father:

"As Sister Mary Aquin is no longer in Rostrevor, and as I am not sure of the name of any of the Sisters, I will take the liberty of introducing to *you* my very dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Kelly and their party, and beg you to introduce them to the inmates of your sweet little convent.

"They are travelling for the purpose of seeing the beauties

of their native land, and, in my opinion, in no place could so many lovely views be found in so small a compass as in the vicinity of Rostrevor.

"You will be glad to know that *this* Hospital has given us many opportunities for promoting the salvation of souls. I must tell you of one that was *undoubtedly* saved almost miraculously yesterday. The evening before, about seven o'clock, a carriage brought to this door a half-distracted father and mother with their only son, aged six years, with the prevailing disorder in a virulent form. The rules of the Hospital require a special permit from the head officer of the Board to enable any friends to remain with the sick, so the poor mother had to leave the child with us and go back to the city for this document. We soon saw the child was dying, and we thought he might not live through the night: and, knowing the negligence and want of faith of so many in this country, we began to fear it had never been baptized, and, not having in the hurry even ascertained the name or nationality of the parents, we had no means of judging. So at nine o'clock p.m. I gave it conditional baptism, and most providential it was I did so, as the mother returned soon after and turned out to be a most bigoted *Baptist*, but one that saw no use in baptizing a *child*, and, as she never left him one instant till he expired, we should have had no chance of pouring the regenerating waters on his head had we deferred it one *half-hour*. This reminds me of a visit we paid once, ostensibly to comfort the *mother*, but in reality to baptize the *child* who was on the point of death. Sister Mary Francis, my companion, was provided with a small bottle of water, and, by way of having better light to look at the little one, took him in her arms to the window, while I in the warmth of my sympathy pressed the mother's hands. Soon the little one was laid in its crib, the child of God, and very soon after it was, I trust, in the enjoyment of His presence. It is terrible to reflect on the hundreds calling themselves *Christians* who have never been baptized, that are met with in this country. I do not know the exact number, but think it must now be over a hundred who have received that Sacrament during this epidemic in this one

hospital. The Catholics afflicted have been very few indeed, and, as a general thing, very fine men. Often remarks have been made on their edifying deaths by persons of other denominations who were present. Soon after Dr. Miller's appointment I was assisting a fine young Irishman, James Fennell, in his last moments; he was *choking*, and in as great agony as any mortal ever suffered, his face purple and his big frame convulsed. I thought him long speechless when the poor fellow, making a great effort, pronounced distinctly the holy names *Jesus*, *Mary*, and *Joseph*. The doctor and nurse, both Protestants, were evidently much impressed but turned away and left me alone, much to my relief. I found afterwards that Sister M. Borgia, one of my companions, had explained to him the indulgence granted for repeating those holy names when dying. A German Lutheran said to me afterwards, 'I see you Catholics do more for your dying than we do'. And true for him, as the poor Protestants are left alone to breathe out their last, and the instant they have ceased to breathe the sheet is drawn over their faces and off they are carried to the 'dead house'. We get too much gratitude, I fear, from the survivors. Still, as it is not *that* we seek, I trust it will not lessen our merit. I will enclose an article in yesterday's 'Pacific,' a religious journal of the Protestant stamp. You will please let James read it, as it may interest him, and I have not a second copy, and neither have I now time to write to him. I have come to the end of my paper without expressing a hope that you are enjoying tolerable health, and that your flock in both the half parishes are your comfort *here*, and that they will be your glory *hereafter*. The Sister I have mentioned above is a convert, and loses no opportunity of begging prayers for the conversion of her aged father, her brother, and two sisters. Please remember them sometimes at Mass, and I will feel very grateful: and pray for me sometimes also.

"Begging your blessing, I remain, dear Rev. Father,

"Ever most respectfully in Jesus Christ,

"Your obedient, humble servant,

"Sister Mary B. Russell,

"*Sister of Mercy.*"

One of Mother Baptist's helpers in this hard task was Sister Mary Francis Benson, who took advantage of a bad cold to write a long letter home to the Kinsale Convent of Mercy. As (unlike the preceding letter) it is already in type in the "Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy," we shall quote only the opening paragraph:—

"This is truly a horrible disease, so loathsome, so disgusting, so pitiable. Twice the number of patients with any other disease would not require the care and attendance that those afflicted with smallpox required. Not one spot from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot sound, the eyes of the greater number closed, and pus running from them down the cheeks; their throats so sore that to take a drink almost chokes them; the tongue sometimes so swollen that not a drop can pass down; the hands so sore that they are helpless, and the odour so terrible that they themselves cry out: 'O Sister, I cannot stand the smell'. The doctors say it is an unusually malignant type. It is strange that few Irish take it. The majority of the sufferers are Germans, the next in number native Americans, with a mixture of Danes, Prussians, French, Spaniards, Italians, and Portuguese."

One of the patients who recovered publishes this "outpouring of a grateful heart," in "The Morning Call," one of the San Francisco newspapers:—

"What shall I say to express my sentiments regarding those ladies so heroic, those angels of Mercy?

"Oh, what work they did for their suffering fellow-creatures! I shall begin with the youngest, a noble specimen of God's work. There she might be seen from 6 a.m. till a late hour at night, going through the wards, carrying a tray with medicine, beef-tea, wine, egg-nog, always with the kind look and benevolent smile that did more good to our hearts than anything the doctor could do for our health. May heaven's blessings descend on that soul! The next, a Spanish lady, whose kind interest in the poor sufferers was manifested by her untiring attention, going her rounds, morning, noon, and night, with a pot of oil in one of her blessed hands, and a little brush in the other, and well may we thank her if there's a bit

of skin left on our poor faces. The third, an old lady—a real lady in every sense of the word. Here words fail to describe her goodness and kindness to all and every one, no matter who they were. O mothers, whose sons died in that hospital, if you could see that blessed lady kneeling by the bedside of your darlings, as I have seen her, with uplifted eyes and hands, wafting the soul to heaven with beautiful prayers! How often did the tears rise up in my man's heart at the blessed actions I have seen her perform for the loathsome bodies of the poor sufferers!

"But these works were done for God, not for the praise of any one. I could tell a great many more divine works of these holy ladies which made the pest-house a place of happiness, but another time. I hear that most worthy lady, the Rev. Mother of St. Mary's, is now at the pest-house in place of one of the blessed souls that I know. May God protect them all —they are real Sisters of Mercy and mothers of the afflicted!"

Mother Baptist was not yet ten years in California when a letter was written, not by her or to her but about her, which has chanced to flutter back to the writer of it thirty-five years after its date. The household to which it was addressed contained two sisters who bore the names of the two sisters of Lazarus. Mary and Martha are often alluded to as being both represented in the vocation of the Sister of Mercy. Thus Dr. Patrick Murray of Maynooth, in the best lines he ever wrote, and perhaps the best that the Sister of Mercy has ever inspired, makes the Sisters say of themselves :—

> Martha's work and Mary's part
> Our endless portion still.

An irrelevant sentence is included in the beginning of the quotation for the sake of an unpublished literary appreciation which reminds me of a passage in Ruskin's "Stones of Venice".[1] "If I could only read English and had to choose, for a library narrowed by poverty, between Cary's Dante and our own original Milton, I should choose Cary without an instant's pause."

[1] Vol. II, p. 262 of the new edition.

"The 'natural man' would like to chat with Dunleer much oftener, for instance, every other day. But that would never do, as Jeffrey said of Wordsworth's 'Excursion'—which Aubrey de Vere informed me in confidence was the greatest work of this century except Cary's translation of Dante.

"Certain Californian dispatches passed through my hands last week. The instructions were that they should reach Dunleer *via* Arthur and Margaret. Have they reached you yet? Kate is a grand creature. The Martha and the Mary elements (nothing personal, I allude not to John's sisters but Lazarus's—have you brought out that possessive *s* with sufficient distinctness? Try it again). Well, to return to Bethania (Dr. Johnson never indulged in a parenthesis, but *I* do), the Martha and Mary elements are mingled in Kate in immense quantities and in most harmonious proportions. She has chosen the better part, but at the same time she manages to have the tea-table pretty comfortable. That was always her way, and it is not a bad way. It will seem past belief, but to hear her talk with such quiet faith and charity of offering up Holy Communion now and then for poor Father McEvoy, whom we at home have forgotten years ago—that and other simple touches in Kate's letter almost betrayed me into that twinge of the nose, moistening of the eyes, and puckering of the mouth, which, with the assistance of a cambric pocket-handkerchief, are known in fashionable society under the name of weeping."

At last in the year 1878 Mother Baptist was allowed to pay her one visit to Europe, as we have already said, for the purpose chiefly of procuring a supply of suitable novices. After landing at Queenstown she and her companion, Sister Mary Columba, proceeded at once to her dear old Alma Mater, St. Joseph's Convent, Kinsale, where they received the heartiest welcome. Sister Columba did not say, like Cardinal Wolsey, "I have come to lay my bones among you"; but so it was to be. After accompanying Mother Baptist to several houses of the Order, she returned to Kinsale with the express purpose of performing there the last great act of dying. How

she performed it we are partly told in a letter of Mother Baptist to her half-brother, Judge Hamill:—

"Convent of Our Lady of Mercy,
"Kinsale, 20 *April*, '79.

"My Dearest Arthur:

"You will be pained to hear I have lost my dear Sister Mary Columba. She died at four o'clock yesterday morning, and I am now just expecting her two brothers, brother-in-law, and her sister; and I assure you I feel no little embarrassment meeting them, for they feel dear Sister's death very deeply. You know already she spent ten days in Tipperary where nothing could exceed the tender care she received. I left there and paid a hurried visit to Thurles and Limerick. While in the latter place, she got Sister M. Joseph Gartlan to write to hasten my return, saying she wanted to reach Kinsale before all her strength was gone. This was her only desire, for she looked on this as next to home, and whenever particularly ill, expressed the hope that, if she were going to die, it might be here. Still neither of us really imagined she was in danger. We rested two days in Cork to break the journey, and at last reached Kinsale, two weeks ago to-morrow, just about the time we shall be laying her in the grave. On Easter Eve she was so ill we gave her up, and on the following Monday she received the last Sacraments. I wrote to inform her brother of our fears, but, being from home, he did not receive my letter till Tuesday evening. Next day he was here for several hours, and found her so much better apparently than he expected that he went off quite relieved. On Friday I saw her end was approaching, and so wrote to him again, and he had my letter in time to prepare him for the telegram announcing her death. About half-past four on Friday she missed me (I had gone to dinner), and sent for me, and, on my coming in, she embraced me so lovingly, and said: 'Don't leave me any more, Mother. You won't have me long now, the great struggle with death is beginning; pray for me, pray for me, and get prayers for me. You won't fret,

Mother; you know God's will is best; I am not sorry to die, God's will be done. Poor Michael and the girls—God help them and *He will.*' This was about all she said, except to ask for Reverend Mother, and, when she came, she begged for *prayers* and *prayers;* and, when mother was saying a few kind words, she said so earnestly, 'Oh, don't mind me but pray'. I tell you all this to secure your prayers and those of dear Mary, Arthur, Alice, Emily, and dear old Kitty. I would be so glad and so grateful if you would all go to Holy Communion and offer it for her soul on the third Sunday after Easter, the Patronage of St. Joseph.

"During the eight or ten hours preceding her death, Sister could not speak, and, as far as we could see, was not even conscious, at least could make no sign of knowing what was said around, though she may have heard it all the time; we were saying to each other it ought to be a lesson to us all, to do all we can for our souls before death comes; for too often the struggle is such as to render it impossible to do much at that awful hour. Well, dear Arthur, all this may not be very interesting to you, but it occupies my mind at present, and I could speak of nothing else. Now that I am no longer obliged to calculate *when* my Sister would be strong enough for the journey, I believe I may say pretty determinedly that we shall sail, please God, on the 30th, and I am arranging to get a young Sister to bear me company, though I might go with one of my 'recruits' by letting her enter here, even one week before our departure, but I think it is better to get one who has been some time in a convent. I will go now overland, as the chief reason for preferring the long sea-voyage was that it agreed better with Sister Columba. I hope, therefore, to reach San Francisco about 24 May. I will write to some one and beg whoever it may be to inform the rest of my safe arrival, as I know you will all be anxious. I enclose an Agnus Dei and marker for each of you with my fondest love. You always have my prayers and deep affection, and if I never saw Mary, Alice, Emily, and Arthur John, for *your* sake they would have the same, but I both know and love them, though I did not see very much of them; and I hope dear

Arthur John will get really strong and have everything that the fondest heart could desire. Give each my love most affectionately.

"Ever, dear Arthur, Your affectionate sister,

"Mary B. Russell,

"*Sister of Mercy.*"

CHAPTER IX.

BACK TO THE GOLDEN GATE.

Before accompanying Mother Baptist back to the distant scene of her life-work, we shall venture to note one quaint little indication of the impression she made during her home tour. Among the convents that she visited was the spacious and most efficient convent of her Order at Dundalk, where her aunt was then a Sister of Mercy, the sole survivor of her generation. One of the persons who called upon her during her stay at St. Malachy's was the excellent local physician, the late Dr. John Gartlan, a relative and lifelong friend of her kinsfolk, who had come south from Killough and made that prosperous town their home. This warm-hearted and clever man was a devoted admirer of the sitting member for the borough, the last that it was ever to return to Parliament before being disfranchised as below the new limit of population. This M.P. was Mother Baptist's brother, then Charles Russell, Q.C., and the doctor's high esteem for him lends energy to this expression of his opinion of our Irish-American nun: "She is as much above that London chap as I am above my Johnnie," namely, his old coachman, for whose intellectual powers he had no great respect, especially in comparison with his own.

Sister Mary Columba having "gone home" by a shorter route, Mother Baptist was left free to hasten her return to California. Members of a family are counselled to keep up certain social formalities as a help to the maintenance of charity, and in religious families such observances cannot be overlooked. The Sisters at Kinsale did better than that Lord Mayor who, at a farewell banquet given to the British Association of Science, said: "A week ago I welcomed you

to this ancient city with a *cead mile failte*, and now I take leave of you with the same idiomatic expression". A hundred thousand welcomes certainly greeted Mother Baptist's arrival but not her departure. In their parting address the Kinsale Sisters say, after many loving words: "You have during your too brief stay with us endeared yourself still more to your loving Sisters in your old convent home. Your visit, beloved Mother, has been indeed a memorable one for you and for us. The saving impress of the Cross, the pledge of our dear Lord's special love, has marked it, and since He has been pleased to take your beloved child and companion to Himself, may we not hope that she will join us in interceding for her cherished and devoted Mother? Her grave will form another link to bind us still more closely to our Sisters in the far West, and, when breathing a prayer for the dear departed, *they* will not be forgotten. And you, beloved Mother, will ever be remembered by us all where remembrance is best—at the foot of the altar. There we shall ask the Divine Prisoner of Love to bless and reward you; and during our visits to Him, especially while you and your little band are on the wide ocean, we shall fervently beseech Him to guide and protect you and bring you safe to the loving ones who anxiously await your return."

To these affectionate words were added what an old writer calls "the mellifluous meeters of poesie," but the farewell song is not as quotable as the song of welcome that greeted Mother Baptist at the other end of her second and last journey from the Old Head of Kinsale to San Francisco and the Golden Gate. Space allows us to give only the opening lines :—

The rapture of this meeting
No parting fears dispel;
The gladness of our greeting
No words may fitly tell;
And in our hearts no other,
No sweeter thought may reign
Than this:—"Our dearest Mother
Is with us once again!"
The long suspense is over,
The pain of waiting past—

Our loved and loving rover
Is safely here at last.
Our heavenward-wafted pleading
Hath ever followed thee
When thou, dear one, wert speeding
Across the crested sea.
We bade Love bind the ocean
With fetters of His will
And calm its wild commotion
With tender "Peace, be still!"
And to our fond petition
He sent His answer sweet,
And safely on their mission
He led thy pilgrim feet,
Until they trod serenely
Their own dear native Isle,
Whose valleys, glist'ning greenly,
Returned thy greeting smile.

Between the prose and the poetical addresses just quoted, Mother Baptist conducted her band of recruits over ocean and continent, and no doubt drilled them quietly on the way. They were about twice as numerous as the original missionary band, in which she was leader, too; and an additional postulant joined them *en route*, to whom was assigned the patron of the deceased Sister Columba, and who was destined to be Mother Baptist's immediate successor in the office of Superior. The younger nun gives this account of their meeting and of their first journey together: "On Sunday, 18 May, 1879, I first saw Mother Baptist Russell. Her first greeting was 'Oh, I know you'. She had seen two sisters of mine who were Sisters of Mercy in Tralee, and recognized me from them. She won my heart at once, inspiring an affection that lasted for the twenty happy years that I spent under her.

"This meeting was in Omaha, on her way back from Ireland, where my sisters had accidentally brought me into communication with her. The next day at noon I left Omaha with Mother Baptist and her companions. Her kindness and thoughtfulness in the cars were extreme—always thinking of others before herself, waiting on them, procuring little comforts for them. We did not feel the almost five days'

travel. The dear Mother beguiled the time with incidents of her early life in California, or of her recent visit to Ireland and England. Our party had a drawing-room car all to itself, and Reverend Mother asked each one of us (eleven in all) to tell a story, to sing, or recite. While crossing the Rockies, the train moves very slowly. We were seated around Mother Baptist, asking for our names in religion. I asked for Patrick, but she said, 'I am sorry you cannot have *that* as we have a Sister Patricia already, and a black novice, Sister Mary Patrick'. One of our companions looked frightened, saying she did not know they had negroes in the convent in San Francisco. Oh, how the dear Mother enjoyed this, and spoke of it during the rest of the trip. Of course the phrase 'black novice' refers to the change of black veil for white veil after Profession. When I addressed her as Reverend Mother, she said, 'I am not Reverend Mother,' but added with a sweet smile that I should think would win any heart, 'but have a very good chance of being such on my return'. As a fact she was in office every time that she could according to rule since 1855. I thought her so wonderful to be able to say from memory the Litany of the Saints, and the long Litany for the Dead, and the one for a happy death, with all the prayers attached to them:[1] she used to say them at dusk every evening. On Friday, 23 May, we reached our destination to the great joy of all. Our dear Mother was delighted to be home again. So here I am ever since, and every day of my life I thank God for having been allowed to associate with Mother Baptist so long and to have known her so intimately."

Mother Baptist's first letter after her return was begun on "2 July, 1879," but not finished till the 19th. "You know from others that I am safe at home since 23 May. Next morning at 10 o'clock I got the keys of the house"—something like being appointed Vicar Capitular during the interregnum before the election of a new Superior—"and the following Thursday I was made *Boss*. So you see I was

[1] In this she took after her mother, who had off by heart the Rosary of Jesus, the Jesus Psalter, and other long prayers that have gone out of fashion.

just in time." She ends a well-filled letter with "a thousand loves to each dear Sister in all the houses"—namely, in Newry Convent of Mercy and its branches.

Mother Baptist thus after her European trip settled down quietly to another long term of office. All testimonies tend to show that she had altogether exceptional gifts for wise, gentle, and firm administration and government; a wonderfully effective combination of the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*. One of her most striking characteristics as a Superior was her calmness, her peace, her self-possession, even in the most untoward circumstances. Part of her secret she reveals in the counsel given to a Sister whom she had placed in charge of a branch house and who was evidently tried a good deal by one of her subjects:—

"Don't on any account let her shortcomings or anything of that kind bother or disturb you in the least, like a good child. God leaves each one of us our free will, and we are accountable for ourselves. See how even the immediate presence and personal intercourse with our Lord did not keep the unhappy Judas right. So do what you can, but keep your mind not alone peaceful but joyous, and the more joyous the better for yourself and all."

She ends this letter with the following very commonplace advice: "See that all the Sisters have heavy, good shoes, and everything necessary to keep them warm and dry, and keep a good fire. Call for a little music occasionally, or play yourself."

After the date that we have reached in her story, Mother Baptist was never again to see Ireland or any of her dear kinsfolk except the elder of her brothers. On 14 August, 1883, Mr. Charles Russell started from Liverpool to pay his first visit to America. His travelling companions were Lord Coleridge, whom he was to succeed as Chief Justice of England, Mr. Justice Hannen, before whom he was to defend Parnell, then the leader of the Irish people, Mr. Patrick Martin, Q.C., M.P. for Kilkenny, and Mr. James Bryce, M.P., whose visit to the States led to the composition of an important work, "Impressions of America," and perhaps led

remotely to the important post that he has since occupied as British Ambassador to the United States. Another of the party, the one with whom we are now concerned, also took notes of what he saw, but only for the gratification of his family at home. It was certainly characteristic that amidst all the fatigue of travelling these pencilled notes went unfailingly week by week across the Atlantic.

None of these were read at home with keener interest than the pages relating to Mother Baptist, when her brother, leaving Lord Coleridge and his other travelling companions in the Eastern States, made his way to California and the Queen of the West. We transcribe at this point a few passages from the diary just as it was hastily jotted down in pencil at the time. San Francisco was not reached by rail over the Rockies, as in Mother Baptist's second journey to it, but by steamer, as in her first. Not now, however, from Panama in the south, but from the north, by Vancouver and the Pacific railroad across Canada.

"As we got farther south, the outlines of the shore were bolder, the bluffs higher and occasionally very fine, reminding me greatly of Ireland, say the coast of Antrim, but nothing, I think, like so fine as the Antrim coast.

"As we were finishing dinner, our courteous Captain, rising from the table, said, 'Gentlemen, I hope you will come on deck in a few minutes, for we shall soon be passing through the Golden Gate'.

"Presently up we went. We were approaching the entrance to this the finest harbour I ever saw. On each side were lighthouses and also strong fortifications for the defence of the port; and a little farther to the south was a great rock known as Seal Rock on which literally thousands of seals hourly and daily disport themselves.

"On, on we go, and, now fairly through the entrance, we see the straggling lights of this the greatest City of the South. But the Golden Gate—where is it? Why so called? I look eagerly forward, but all I see in the dull light of the rapidly closing day is a murky, smoky atmosphere, such as one sees in the busy towns of Lancashire. Why the Golden Gate?

In my perplexity I turn back to the west which we are leaving, and I need no further explanation. The revelation is made to me. The sun has gone down but left the traces of his bright golden glory behind him, and there between the two headlands which form the pillars (themselves gilt by the brightness all around them) we see only one blaze of rich golden light from side to side. It is well called the Golden Gate. A turn in our course presently shuts out this brightness from our view, and we discern in the dull light a number of vessels anchored in what seems and is in fact an immense anchorage ground. We thread our way cautiously amongst them, and, finally landed at Broadway wharf, we are taken possession of by the employés of the Palace Hotel, San Francisco, and in its hospitable portals we speedily find ourselves. I will by-and-by tell you what San Francisco is like.

"*Tuesday*, 18 *September*, 1883.

"My impressions of yesterday evening of the beauty of this place were quite confirmed this morning. We arrived at the Palace Hotel and found it all ablaze and a band playing in the atrium or courtyard which was crowded.

"Our rooms had been engaged and were the best in the house—on the sixth story! They were really very fine, large, lofty, with bathroom and dressing-room to each—in fact very complete suites of rooms. In the morning we found we had a distant view of the Bay and across to Goat Island over the intervening city.

"'Frisco is certainly beautifully situated, and beautifully laid out. Sheltered from the West by the southern arm of the Bay, it rests upon a succession of hills—many of them very steep—which seem to run almost in regular parallel lines.

"Though much smaller in population than Chicago, it is a much more taking city. There is also a great appearance of business activity. Altogether, after New York it is the finest city I have seen here.

"The system of tramcars is the most perfect I have seen. Even the steepest hills are charged by steam trams worked

on the endless-chain principle; and you can travel from one end of the city to the other for five cents. This is the only cheap thing, this tramcar travelling, which I have yet come across in the United States.

"I went early to St. Mary's Hospital, situated on the top of Rincon Hill. I was being shown into a parlour when Kate approached—looking on the whole very well and strong, and exactly as she looked when in Great Britain four years ago—not looking a day older.

"The Sisters of Mercy were not the first religious sisterhood in 'Frisco, but they have since their arrival, about the year 1854, made marked progress. Outside the convent and outside the Catholic community the noble work they have done is gratefully acknowledged.

"On Rincon Hill they have a large hospital, a work school, and a home for aged women.

"They have altogether five branches in 'Frisco and in Sacramento, and have in charge several schools. They receive no aid from the State funds, and no compensation for the important teaching services which they render. Neither do any other of the Catholic schools. In this important particular Catholic schools are much better off in England.

"Kate inquired very anxiously about everybody at home, and I gave her the fullest particulars I could. She complains that, although they have been promised to her, she has not yet received the photos of Margaret, Lily, May, and Bertie. This should be seen to. I am sure also she would like photos of little Willie and Alice.

"I also saw Mary Martin in her nun's dress. (She used to be a companion to my mother.) She is a bright cheery little nun.

. . . . . .

"So far as I can gather, there is no place in the United States in which on the whole the Catholic body, or in other words the Irish Catholic body, stands so well as in San Francisco in point of religious organization, education, mercantile, social, and political position.

"I spent all yesterday afternoon and the greater part of

to-day with Kate. At St. Mary's Hospital, the children of their schools—bright, healthy, intelligent-looking children they were—went through certain calisthenic and musical exercises, very pleasant to see and to hear. As to the latter I was rather surprised when the pianist who accompanied the singers struck up the English National Anthem of John Bull. 'God save the Queen,' here in a Republican country! However, my surprise soon ceased for the accompanying song was an ode to America, entitled 'America,' and which as a national air ranks close after 'The Star Spangled Banner'.

"I also went through the hospital wards. They are bright, cheery, and wonderfully neat and clean. They have wards for the poor, and also for those who can pay for higher class accommodation. Their patients are frequently Protestants—indeed Kate says she knows the Protestant Bishop very well from the fact of his frequently coming to visit his co-religionists and subjects in the wards.

"Later we drove (that is, Kate, Sister Mary Aquin Martin, James Gartlan and myself) in the convent carriage and pair to the Penitents' Home and Reformatory at Potrero avenue on the outskirts of the city.

"The establishment at Potrero was most interesting, and it is worth noting that, as regards the inmates of the Reformatory school, these are committed to the care of the good Sisters by the State authorities, who pay for each child, or at least contribute to the support of each child.

"I think I have already mentioned poor old Miss Kate Russell, one of the six sisters formerly of Elm Hall, near Leixlip, Co. Dublin, who lived many years in Cincinnati. She is the last survivor. She is a ladylike, handsome old person who is ending her days with Kate in cheerfulness and peace. She was delighted to see me and seemed to feel the leave-taking a good deal. She thought me very like Kate, but my face seemed to awaken old memories, some sweet and some bitter, no doubt, that probably long had slept. Poor, dear old soul! God has anyway given her a quiet evening for her life."

I may here interrupt our diarist to mention that the "poor

dear old soul" lingered on for nearly nine years more. Mother Baptist's account of her death is contained in a letter to her aunt, another Sister of Mercy at Dundalk, sister to Dr. Russell of Maynooth, the last survivor of that generation, who died 27 October, 1900, aged 87 years. I may here claim this venerable religious as my godmother. Her responsibilities at my christening were shared by her brother, the future president of Maynooth College. As this holy priest and nun were my sponsors at the beginning of my life on earth, may God in His mercy grant that they may welcome me together into the true life of Heaven!

"Our dear old cousin Kate has got her wish—she has not survived you. She died at 3 p.m. on Saturday (26th), and is now lying in her coffin in our chapel, and will be taken to the cemetery at 3.30 this afternoon. You know how ill she has been since the early part of January; she rallied somewhat after a time, but never recovered any strength, and long before her death she had absolutely *none*. She could not hold her head up, she could not move hand or foot one inch; indeed I almost fancied it must be paralysis in a mild form. Towards the last she suffered a great deal. I never saw anyone so patient; not once did she moan or speak of her sufferings, nor did she ever contract her brows or give any sign of what she was going through. If asked, she answered in a gentle tone, 'Yes, I have great pain'—but of herself she never mentioned it. You never saw a sweeter-looking corpse; she has not a wrinkle on her brow, and her skin is so pure she really looks beautiful. She is laid out in a brown habit, with a beautiful little white lace cap. She could not speak for many weeks, but was perfectly sensible up to the last; we were glad she died in the daytime, as all could be with her; she was really beloved by every one that came in contact with her. Indeed she was well cared for, and I often blessed God for bringing her here; for, kind as the good Jacobs are, I would be sorry to have her die surrounded by strangers. The Rosary dear uncle Charles gave her as a parting gift when leaving Ireland; clay from her father's grave; some from the grave in Columbus; hair of several of the family; her mother's

daguerreotype, and some other old family relics are all buried with her as she desired. I trust there has been a happy meeting in heaven."

I will add only a few more lines from my brother's American diary:—

"One interesting spot, and a sad one in some sort, too, is the Sisters' graveyard at Potrero. Here on the bright hill-side, under the shades of the maple-tree and the cotton wood, rest nearly one-half of that devoted band whom Kate led, now nearly thirty years ago, from the old world to the new, carrying the Cross with them.

. . . . . .

"I left poor Kate very sad, poor soul, but greatly pleased at having had the old land brought closer to her by my presence. God bless her and all the Sisterhood, who promised to pray very steadily for me and for mine. By the way, as Kate was the Reverend Mother, I was promptly dubbed 'Uncle,' but without the 'Reverend'."

Here our extracts, more copious than we intended, end. We may join to them a still more domestic report contained in a letter from R. M. to Mother Emmanuel, dated 15 Nov. 1883: "Clara says Charles looks exceedingly well and healthy after his trip, and says he feels quite lazy about taking up the heap of work that was waiting for him in London. He brought to each of us some little present from Reverend Mother of San Francisco. Mine was a very beautifully worked pair of scapulars."

An account of this meeting between brother and sister is also given by the Sister in a short letter, which we may quote in full:—

"St. Mary's Hospital, S.F.,
"California, 21 *Sept.* '83.

"My Dear Matthew:

"Before the day ends, I must write to you: first, as it is your feast, and we have all prayed for your every happiness as fervently as we could; and, secondly, to let you know dear Charles is actually in California. He wrote me a couple of

weeks ago from Winnipeg that I might expect to see him if nothing unforeseen occurred before the end of the month. On last Tuesday I happened to be in the parlour, when in walked a gentleman with gloves. 'This is not a Californian,' said I to myself. And lo! raising my eyes, I saw Charles, and, you will be glad to hear, looking remarkably well—bronzed, no doubt, by his travels in this warm climate. He had arrived in this city the night before from Puget's Sound, by steamer, of course, and I think, like myself, the sea does not agree with him, for he was a little upset by the voyage and called on our doctor, who merely prescribed certain regimen. Cousin Kate was delighted more than I can explain to see Charles, and quite pleased to find the sweet, gentle expression of countenance so different from what his photograph would lead one to expect. He sat an hour or more, and then went to call on James Gartlan and Joseph Jennings. D. J. Oliver, one of our best and wealthiest Catholics, intended to have Charles his guest, but he had already settled himself with his friend at the Palace Hotel and did not care to make a change. Mr. Oliver was watching the list of passengers expected overland, by which route we supposed Charles would come, and he intended to meet him; but he got here unknown to us all. He had calls from a half dozen gentlemen that night, and next morning, at 6.30, he drove in an open carriage to the Cliff House (via Golden Gate Park) where he and party had breakfast, and saw all that is to be seen there, in the way of seals, etc., etc., and got here at noon. He and I spent a quiet hour together, telling me of all at home, the *little ones*, perhaps, getting an undue amount of time. I thought he had plenty of time at his disposal, and the Sisters had lunch prepared for him in the Community Room, when we found he had arranged to start at three for Yosemite Valley and was to lunch with Mr. Martin before, so we had to let him go after a hurried visit to the Home or at least to a part of it. In one room the tears came to his eyes, when he saw dear Mamma's obituary hanging in a central position—the room belongs to Mary Devlin who lived at Mr. Greer's and knew our mother and Sisters M. Aquin and Emmanuel well. He expects to return on Tuesday, and I must get one day to

show him the asylum, schools, etc. The weather is pretty warm at present, and I fear where Charles is now it must be extremely hot. It is too bad he is so hurried. I hope he won't be half-dead from fatigue, running at such a rate.

"Now, my dear Matthew, may God bless you for ever and ever. Pray for me.

"Your affectionate sister,

"M. B. Russell,

"*Sister of Mercy.*"

To this same exciting event in the holy exile's life there is an allusion in a later letter of hers. She was a diligent reader of "The Irish Monthly," which, in February, 1884, introduced thus its recommendation of Mr. James Britten's "Young Collector's Handbook of Flowering Plants":—

"A recent traveller, whose unpublished notes would form a delightful volume, makes in one place the following remark: 'Several times during this trip I found myself regretting that I did not know at least a little smattering of both botany and geology. Learn from this, O ye young! while there is yet time, to cultivate extended tastes. They will be a pleasure to you always, but especially a pleasure and an added interest when later in life you come to travel.'"

Writing on 23 March, Mother Baptist orders several copies of Mr. Britten's little book, and says: "I suspect the 'recent traveller' alluded to at page ninety-eight of the February 'Irish Monthly,' who recommends the young to study botany as a source of additional pleasure when travelling, must be *Charles*. No doubt an insight into the workings of nature in the vegetable kingdom does add much to the pleasure of every observing mind whether travelling or not."

Her guess, of course, was correct; and her thoughts, no doubt, travelled in the same direction if she read a "Pigeon-hole Paragraph" in the same magazine for May, 1891, which might have been quoted in the opening pages of the present sketch as an illustration of the wholesome discipline of those young people's Killowen life. I venture to give it now out of its place, moral and all:—

"Half a dozen children, girls and boys, once lived very happily in an unpretentious but comfortable house, which was separated by only a couple of fields—their own fields—from the seashore. Could it be called the seashore? In reality it was the shore of a large Irish bay, where the sea had room enough to behave like a real sea, yet not too wildly or too Atlantically.

"The mother of these children used, once or twice a year, to travel to Dublin—which, to the children, seemed as far away as Chicago seems now. Every time she came back it seemed as if they had lost their mother and found her again.

"To increase the warmth of her welcome the wise mother took care not to return empty-handed, but to bring a gift for each of her young people. On one of these occasions there was a cloud over the sunshine. The excellent governess, who was the mother's vicegerent, and who was always treated with the fullest confidence and respect, felt it her duty to report unfavourably on one of the boys. May God reward her for discharging a painful duty, not giving in weakly at the end and hushing it all up in the joy of the mother's home-coming! And may God reward the good mother for not making light of the offence or seizing on some expedient for receiving the culprit back at once into favour! No, the other gifts were distributed—one of them was 'Uncle Buncle's True and Instructive Stories about Animals, Insects, and Plants'—but the gift intended for the young evil-doer, whose transgression was not very wicked, was not merely withheld for a time, but never bestowed upon him. The credit of his subsequent career was, perhaps, partly attributable to the firmness and wisdom of his early discipline, of which this is a sample.

"But 'these things are said for a parable'. The incident may illustrate God's way of dealing with us, His poor children. He leaves Himself to a great extent at our mercy. How many graces may He have designed for me and never conferred upon me for reasons similar to those which kept back for ever the companion-volume to 'Uncle Buncle's True and Instructive Stories about Animals, Insects, and Plants'!

Bartoli, in his 'Life of St. Ignatius,' quotes this saying of his: 'God would readily bestow very many graces upon us if our perverse will did not place an obstacle to His liberality'. What a pity! It might be well for us, each of us, in his own heart, to go deeper than would be becoming in this place into this sad subject of God's ungiven gifts, and to ask the Sacred Heart to save us from the consequences of past folly."

As I have here perpetrated a flagrant anachronism in going back over more than twice "twenty golden years ago," I may, also, before taking up again the thread of our story, record another curious little incident belonging to the same remote past, which the following paragraph in the "Westminster Gazette" called to mind:—

"The Lord Chief Justice was at Southampton yesterday to witness the sailing of the Kildonan Castle, which is taking his son, Lieutenant Russell, R.A., to the Cape. In describing the farewell the 'Daily Mail' says that the parting, although father and son evidently both felt it keenly, was not without its humorous side. When the siren had hoarsely ordered 'All ashore,' Lord Russell of Killowen, from the quay-side, did his best to attract his son's attention, but in vain. Growing desperate, the Lord Chief Justice placed two fingers to his mouth and blew a shrill whistle with an ease which a boy might have envied. Lieutenant Russell, recognizing the signal, came to the taffrail smiling."

Now it happens that this is a case of history repeating itself; for what the newspapers which retailed this very unimportant incident termed, "the L.C.J.'s whistle-call," had been used by him nearly sixty years before for this very purpose of attracting some person's attention at a distance. One evening he and his little brother strolled to the shore of Carlingford Lough along with a white-haired peasant boy of the same age, who grew up to be more than eight feet in height and some four hundred pounds in weight and to gain fame and fortune by being exhibited as Murphy, the Irish giant, over all the countries of Europe except Ireland—for he would never consent to make a show of himself in his own country. Well,

this little fair-haired[1] boy and the two brothers plucked a store of the choicest ears of wheat in one of the fields near the beach and made their way out to a large fishing-boat which was anchored in the Glarry Hole and which the retreating tide had left accessible to little feet that had no objection to being wet. They ensconced themselves snugly in the bottom of the boat, and, between telling stories and eating wheat, amused themselves so well that they forgot where they were till the returning tide had completely surrounded them. Probably they could have waded safely through the waves when they first perceived their situation; but they were afraid and remained in the boat till the tide had reached its full, leaving the castaways far out at sea, as it seemed to them. They were hardly in any danger, for the boat was securely anchored; but it was dark night and high tide and wild enough before some men rowed out to their rescue, having been made aware of their plight by means of that shrill whistling which boys are fond of producing by the combined efforts of their lips and fingers, and which a half-century later enabled the young artillery officer starting for the war to get a last glimpse of his father among the crowd on Southampton quay. It is, perhaps, useful to add that, instead of being made much of—as might have been the case with weak-minded parents—the rescued mariners were treated as criminals, and, next day, a gentle flogging with a not very formidable substitute for a cat-o'-nine-tails was administered to the responsible leader of the party. The historic muse remembers what was the precise instrument

[1] Both his parents were of quite ordinary stature. He died of smallpox, at Marseilles, towards the end of his twenty-seventh year; but his body was brought home to Killowen, to be buried in the old Kilbroney graveyard, near Rostrevor. The spot is marked by a large Celtic cross bearing this inscription: "Of your charity pray for the soul of Patrick Murphy, Killowen (the Irish giant), to whose memory this monument has been erected by a few friends and admirers. R.I.P." Then follows this extract from the Parish Register: "This young man was admittedly the tallest man in the world at the time of his death, his exact height being eight feet one inch. He was born 15 June, 1834, and died at Marseilles, 18 April, 1862. His remains were embalmed, brought home and interred in Kilbroney graveyard, 18 June, 1862.—J. McKenna, C.C."

employed on this solitary (and surely not very grievous) occasion, but shrinks from confiding it to the printer.

I am not sure that Murphy, the Irish giant, ever visited San Francisco, like the oldest of his comrades in peril. The visit, from which we have strayed so far, was the last glimpse that Mother Baptist was to get of any of her kindred on earth. Lord Russell, indeed, paid a second visit to the United States, in August, 1896, at the invitation of the American Bar Association, to whom he delivered an address on International Law and Arbitration at Saratoga Springs, 20 August. On this occasion, however, he was not accompanied only by men like Lord Coleridge, Sir James Hannen, Mr. Bryce, M.P., and Sir Horace Davey, as in his first trip. From these he could separate, as he could separate from Sir Frank Lockwood and Mr. Crackanthorpe, Q.C.—his travelling companions on the second occasion. But, in 1896, he brought also with him his wife and one of his daughters; and he knew that they would be unequal to the additional fatigue of the second long journey that he had himself made in 1883.

CHAPTER X.

SOME MORE LETTERS.

Mother Mary Baptist's visit to Europe may be taken as dividing her American life into two parts, and it is with the latter half that we have now to deal. Like the first she began it as Superior, as she mentions in a letter addressed to "My dear Mother Mary Emmanuel, de Sales, Vincent, and all in the three houses"—namely, Newry, Rostrevor and Lurgan:—

"A joint letter is best, as I shall not have much time, and I ought to have written long before this. You know, from others, that I am safe at home since 23 May. Next morning, at 10 o'clock, I got the keys of the house, and the following Thursday was made *Boss*. So you see I was *just in time*. I found dear Sister Margaret Mary wonderfully changed for the few months I was gone; but she has rallied since and may linger months yet. She came over here for the Election but did not venture to the Chapel. The Archbishop visited her afterwards in the Infirmary and gave her permission to receive Holy Communion twice a week without having kept her fast. I told him how good your holy Bishop is to your sick, but he only smiled. Dr. Delany only allows it twice a week also.

. . . . . .

"We have a poor cripple here who asked to be enrolled in the scapular on the Feast of the Visitation. The Sister expressed some surprise that he had never been enrolled before. 'Well, now, Sister,' said the poor fellow, 'how could I wear the Scapular of the Blessed Virgin and I telling the boys the cigars I was selling were the best that could be got, and I knowing they weren't? And I used to turn the spotted side

of the oranges down, too.' Had not the poor fellow a nice conscience? I think I told you of some of the out-of-the-way titles by which I am occasionally addressed. Since I returned I got a letter directed to the 'Virgin Mother in Jesus Christ'; *that* was diametrically opposite to '*Baptist Russell, Esq.*,' I got on another occasion."

After several pages of domestic gossip, profoundly interesting to her correspondents, she ends with "a thousand loves to each dear Sister in all the houses". The religious vocation had evidently not killed all kindly feeling in Mother Baptist. She was not to be classed with those whom St. Paul accused of being *sine affectione*.

To this second division of Mother Baptist's California life belongs, almost exclusively, the large mass of her correspondence which has been placed in my hands. In that way, at least, she revisited constantly the dear island that lay far away over a thousand leagues of land and sea. Writing on 3 May, 1881, she says:—

"I believe that the population of Ireland is less than it has ever been. I am sorry. I love my native land more and more each day."

And her successor writes of her in some notes that she has furnished to me:—

"She loved Ireland with a deep, undying love. She felt keenly for its poor, and frequently contributed to the relief of distressed districts; and, when she was unable to do anything herself, she interested others in the good work. She took particular delight in praising any one who did any good for Ireland. Anything published about Lady Aberdeen she always read aloud for the Sisters: and many a time her fervent *may God bless her* must have done that lady good. No one ever rendered her a service that that same fervent prayer was not offered up for them."

I have just now implied that Mother Baptist made her letter-writing a work of charity, zeal, and edification. Her letters were full of facts that tended "to the A.M.D.G.—" as holy people sometimes say, who are not fully acquainted with the grammatical significance of those initials. It will

not, I trust, be indiscreet to give as a specimen the following account, received at first hand, of the conversion of General Rosecrans and his brother, afterwards Bishop of Columbus. It is contained in a letter which Mother Baptist wrote on the 30 October, 1880 :—

"Our Vicar-General came to me last Tuesday to ask me to entertain for a few hours the Ursuline Nuns, who were expected to arrive the following day, *en route* for Santa Rosa where they have purchased a house and three acres and are going to open a boarding school. We were, of course, happy to do so, and prepared a good lunch in the Community Room for them, and General and Mrs. Rosecrans, young Mr. and Miss Rosecrans, and Father Prendergast the Vicar-General himself. One of the Sisters was a daughter of the General, and that was the reason of the whole family's being here. While the ladies were refreshing themselves after the long journey by the application of soap and water, I had an opportunity of getting into conversation with the gentlemen, and having heard that the General owed his conversion to the politeness of a pedlar, I had the curiosity to ask was it so. He said that, though that settled the point, he had often thought of it before while studying the military profession at West Point. He then told me that he and a brother officer were one day walking; the road was in a horrible condition, and, at one point where it was particularly bad, a plank had been laid for foot passengers. Just as he and his companion got on it they perceived a poor man coming towards them and nearly half-way over, but, as soon as he saw them, back he walked to allow them to pass. The General turned to thank him for his politeness, and, seeing he carried a pedlar's pack, asked what he had. The man answered: 'I am selling Catholic books'. It seems that the General had often heard that Catholics had some dark secrets which they kept for themselves, so he said to his companion, 'We have heard awful things of these Papists, let us see what they have to say for themselves'. So saying he bought 'The Catholic Christian Instructed' for himself and some other book for his friend, and you will say they studied their lesson well when I tell

you the second officer is now a Paulist Father, Rev. George Deshon, and General Rosecrans is ever since a practical Catholic, and has brought up his children the same; his eldest son died a Paulist Father a couple of years ago, and two of his daughters joined the Ursulines. He was married at the time he became a Catholic, and his wife felt his change of religion deeply and seemed determined to supply or rather atone for his defection by increased zeal; but before many years she, too, opened her eyes to the true light, and goes hand in hand with her husband in all good deeds.

"Now about the Bishop. He was much younger than his brother, and at College when he embraced the Catholic Faith. After leaving College he visited his brother, who wisely refrained from bringing the subject of religion much before him, but there were plenty of good Catholic books around, and the young man read them and they had the desired effect, but he was of a silent, thoughtful turn and said little or nothing. One day the General saw him apparently much amused at something he was reading and asked him what it was. The other answered, 'Spalding's Critique on D'Aubigny's History of the Reformation, and I have just come to the story we used to be told of Luther's never once even hearing of the Bible until he accidentally met one and the reading of it opened his eyes to the errors of Popery. I confess it always struck me as a ridiculous story, but this writer tears it to pieces in style!' Another day when they feared he had met some accident when boating and were rejoicing at seeing him safely on shore again, his brother said, 'To be candid, Sylvester, I was worried about your soul more than your body, for I think you know too much for it to be safe for you to die as you are,' and sure enough he did know too much to remain a Protestant any longer, and the very next day when the family were going to Mass, he said to his brother, 'You had better ask that priest if he would come and examine if I know enough to be baptized'. This is all I had time to hear, for the ladies returned and other things had to be discussed.

"But though conversions to the Faith are delightful, conversions from sin are still better, so I will ask a fervent Pater and Ave for a young man who died on Thursday last, having

within a couple of days, made a general confession, *been married*, anointed, and received the Holy Viaticum."

Twenty-ninth April, 1889, when the Parnell Commission was "dragging its slow length along," Mother Baptist wrote to the anxious advocate:—

"My Dearest Charles:

"I need not tell you we are watching with intense interest your struggle with the powers of the land, and glory in the success that seems to attend your efforts. Three things especially rejoice my heart: first, that you are true to your Faith, then to your country, and last to the principles of temperance. May God bless you, my dear brother, and preserve you ever true to these three points, and then your glory *here* will not lessen your glory *hereafter*. This is my prayer; for would I care for all the good you procure for the cause in which you are engaged if it deprived you of one degree of happiness hereafter? 'What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world if he suffer the loss of his own soul?'

"To give you an idea of how the poor Irish out here watch the progress of the trial, I will tell you how one of our patients, after weeks of delirium in fever, only just got a gleam of consciousness when he asked the doctor how the Parnell case was progressing; and, when told how gloriously everything was going on, the poor fellow uttered a heartfelt 'Thanks be to God!' and declared that the news did him more good than a dozen bottles of medicine.

"Now, dear Charles, I want you to send a little remittance to —— in Brooklyn. I believe it is *needed*, though it may not be *deserved;* but we must overlook that fact once more.

"I had a little share of sickness myself this last year, but now, thank God, I am all right. We may thank our good Mother's wise rearing for very many of the blessings that we enjoy. May God bless you, my dear Charles. When you make your Easter Communion, give me a memento.

"Your ever affectionate

"Sister M. B. Russell,

"*Sister of Mercy.*"

I will join with this reference to the Parnell trial an account of the great speech contained in a letter which came into my hands at the time by a lady whose name I never knew:—

"What will you say when I tell you I was at the Special Commission on Wednesday and Friday last? I heard Sir Charles Russell wind up his magnificent speech, and I shall never forget the scene and the sensations of that last day. I need not tell you what was said—of course, the world knows that now—but the way in which it was said, the manner and the effect were beyond description. At that passage—'When I opened this case, my Lords, I said I represented the accused,'—he began in an ordinary conversational tone; but I shall never forget the voice of thunder in which he continued '*We* are the accusers, and the accused are *there!*' He stood erect, and with one outstretched arm pointed to where the Attorney-General and 'The Times' solicitors were sitting. I assure you my blood ran cold, and a thrill went through the whole court. Again, when he said—'I speak for the land of my birth,'—his voice quite failed, and I saw him put his hand to his eyes and wipe away the tears. I can speak with the greatest certainty because I was facing him, at about five yards' distance. You can judge what a good place I had when I tell you that the bench I sat on just held six (a tight fit) and Mrs. Gladstone and her daughter were two. There was a Lady Pollock, and a lady who sat beside her (with whom I had a lot of conversation), and whom Mrs. Gladstone kissed when she came in. Your humble servant came next, and then two other ladies, friends of the whole party, but I did not catch their names, except that one was called Lady Camilla, but I did not hear her surname: so you will admit I was well placed. I shall never forgive myself for not having shaken hands with and congratulated Mr. Parnell. These five ladies did so, but evidently they knew him, and both he and Davitt seemed on quite familiar terms with Mrs. Gladstone. But I think on such an occasion even a stranger would be justified in doing so. The truth was I got shy and lost courage. I had the satisfaction of smiling at him, and he

returned it in his most gracious manner. He must have thought I belonged to the Upper Ten, seeing me in such company; but he was sadly mistaken, and it was the veriest chance my getting such a place—simply because the gallery was full, and there was no other place available; so I was requested to go there, and I consented in the most condescending and benignant manner. Fancy! when the speech was concluded, Mr. Reid stood up to ask for an adjournment and was quite unable to speak. The judge asked him to repeat his request, and he attempted and failed a second time; so the Attorney-General (I thought very good-naturedly) stood up and said—'He is applying for an adjournment, my Lords,'—but poor Mr. Reid had a lump in his throat that he could not remove; and I was not surprised. It was a thrilling moment. I shall remember it to the end of my life, and I feel so thankful that I had the extraordinary luck of being present. I have the chance of a ticket for the 30th, when Mr. Parnell will be in the witness-box. I devoutly hope I may get in; but, even if I do not, I have done very well, as I have been present four days. I hope you are much interested in all this, as we are; if not, I shall have written in vain. But even 'The Standard' admitted that the speech deserved to be classed with the finest forensic efforts of the century, and praise from an enemy like that deserves to be noted. I feel so proud, too, that he is a Catholic and an Irishman."

What Mother Baptist has just said in her letter about her brother's loyalty to his Faith may be illustrated from Mr. Edward Dicey's article in "The Fortnightly Review," October, 1900. I will first quote a few words that bear on another matter.

Mr. Dicey refers to a general impression that Lord Russell of Killowen "was not a personage who inspired much affection in ordinary life and that he was rather esteemed and honoured than beloved. This estimate [he goes on to say] will never be endorsed by those who knew something of the inner life of the late Lord Chief Justice. In my memory he will live not only as the kindest of friends but as the pleasantest of companions and the most interesting of talkers."

Mr. Dicey speaks of some visits to Carlsbad in Lord Russell's company, and he thinks "there is no better test of character than fellow-travelling. Russell [he adds] was an advanced Radical, a devout Catholic, an ardent Home Ruler, and an admirer of Gladstone. My convictions were politically, theologically, and personally the exact opposite of those entertained by my fellow-traveller. He never said anything to jar on my feelings."

But here is the passage which I wish to link with Mother Baptist's letter :—

"To any sound appreciation of Russell's character it is necessary, especially for men of the world, to realize how much his career was influenced by his religion. . . . He was devotedly attached to the Faith of his birth. Many members of his family were members of religious orders; and he resented any disparaging remarks about the Catholic Church and about conventual establishments as being personally offensive to himself. He was, even when travelling abroad, a regular attendant at the services of his Church, and would, I have no doubt, have been distressed if he had seemed in any way not to attach due importance to the ministrations of the priesthood."

I will end my quotations with a few more words on the other point referred to. "In private life and in his own house Russell showed a side of his character which was not easily recognized by strangers who only knew him professionally, that of a singularly domestic, affectionate, and kind-hearted head of a family. It was not only that he returned to the full the affection that he inspired, but that his household seemed to me more united than any one it has ever been my lot to know. In the Russell household there was an exceptional community of interests, affections, tastes, and ideas." Mr. Dicey winds up with this judgment : "He must be known hereafter as a great advocate and a great judge—probably as the greatest of his day ".[1]

[1] As judge, he earned the epithets which Mr. W. E. Henley has crushed into one line of verse for the benefit of Lord Roberts :—

"Patient, ready, masterful, merciful, high, irresistible, just."

CHAPTER XI.

LOVE OF THE POOR AND AFFLICTED.

I AM not sure of the exact form of the saying which tells us that the happiest reign has the shortest history. In like manner a uniformly holy and useful life does not furnish the vicissitudes which make a biography interesting. Some poet has summarized in a couplet a career that was in reality more praiseworthy than many a one full of the most striking incidents :—

> That he was born, it cannot be denied—
> He ate, drank, slept, wrote deathless works and died.

In the case of our Sister of Mercy "wrought" should be substituted for "wrote". She nearly completed her three-score years and ten, each day of all these years full of good solid work for God and His poor human creatures; but one day was like another, and the beauty of her life lay rather in the perfection with which she fulfilled her duties and the quiet cheerful perseverance with which she gave herself to the realization of her high ideals from childhood till her latest breath. As Mother Columba, her successor, says : "Her life was simple in the extreme. It was her beautiful way of doing things that constituted their worth. Her deeds of charity and kindness will never be numbered in this world."

Even as a child, she had shown special love for the aged and for the poor. I distinctly remember, through a vista of nearly sixty years,[1] the positive delight and affection that shone upon her face as she looked at a poor old mendicant and his wife, to whom she had given a bowl of good soup.

[1] In issuing this sketch again many years after it was written, I have not deemed it necessary to correct dates like this, which might now be changed into "fully seventy years".

Her girlish theory and practice in those primeval days had a large share in inspiring twenty years afterwards "The Poor Man's Knock," of which the first stanzas may be quoted :—

'Tis many a year, a score and more,
Since a little boy in blue frock
Would run to open the great hall-door,
Whose latch he scarce could reach from the floor—
"It is only a poor man's knock".

The harsh word "beggar" was under ban
In that quaint old house by the sea ;
And little Blue Frock's announcements ran :
"'Tis a poor little girl—'tis a poor blind man—
Poor woman with children three".

And when our little boy would say,
"There's a poor person at the door,"
The sister who carried the keys that day
From a willing mother leave would pray
To give to him of her store.

The "poor person" fared none the worse if the little housekeeper for the week happened to be the future Mother Baptist.

So was it from the beginning; and till the end her grief was that she had not enough to give to the poor, that she was unable to relieve their wants as generously as her heart yearned to do. In her visitation of the sick there were thousands and thousands of scenes like this, reported as follows by one of her young Sisters :—

"I accompanied Reverend Mother on a visit to a poor sick woman who had four young children ; we found the poor creature lying on the floor, unable to help herself in any way. The room she occupied was almost destitute of furniture, but there was a rickety old bed and mattress. Reverend Mother asked the sick woman why she did not occupy the bed. Was it not better than the bare floor? She answered that her husband, a drunken, worthless fellow, had dragged her from it the previous night. The dear Mother went into the little adjoining room which served for kitchen, living room and all, got a little water and washed the poor woman's face ; then called in a child from the street and told her to borrow a

nightgown from the next neighbour, which the said neighbour kindly gave (often we meet charity among the poor which is frequently wanting among the better class). Reverend Mother changed the creature's clothes, tied up the old bed with the help of her companion, placed the mattress on it and helped the sick woman into it. The poor woman blessed her and God who sent her to minister to her wants. This blessing of the poor the good Mother valued highly, and she herself frequently made use of the prayer when anything was done for her, 'May God bless you'.

"Reverend Mother then went into the kitchen and out into the yard and collected sticks and paper, cleaned the little stove, made the fire and put on the kettle to boil, while at the same time she directed me to tidy the apartment. The good Mother made a cup of tea, she herself had brought all the necessaries. She took it to the sick creature who had had nothing of the kind for days. (The dear Mother who was always only too ready to excuse faults in all, said that it was the want of little comforts when ailing, tired, overworked, etc., that caused many of the poor to have recourse to intoxicating drinks.)

"While Reverend Mother was giving the poor woman the drink, I was cleaning the kitchen and found scraps of onions, small pieces of potatoes, etc., on a soiled plate, and in order to wash this I threw the scraps away. Reverend Mother went into the yard again to hunt up more wood, etc., and found what I had thrown out. She picked it up, found also a few small pieces of meat, placed all in saucepan on the fire, and in a few minutes she had a nice little stew ready for the four children's supper, with the addition of some bread and tea."

I shall let another Sister describe some other sick-calls made in company with Mother Baptist; and I expect to be more than forgiven for not suppressing some very simple details:—

"I well remember my first visitation with her. We went to one of the small alleys, up a rickety stair. The patient was in bed (a querulous old maid). Reverend Mother spoke

to her in a soothing tone for a few minutes, and asked her how she was since her recent visit. Then Mother pinned up her cloak, and she had a pair of sheets pinned around her, one in front and the other across and fastened behind, and a pillow-case pinned on each arm. The poor creature's bed was in a bad condition. Reverend Mother made it up fresh, while she directed me to tidy the room. Her prayers for the sick were soothing and consoling. Indeed, she fulfilled the precept of the Apostle; she became all to all to gain them to Christ. On another occasion she went to visit a Protestant, whose wife and children were good Catholics. This man had been very ill for some time. It happened to be the Feast of the Holy Name. Mother spoke to him of the goodness of God, of Heaven, etc. Mr. W. answered rather sharply, 'he was quite satisfied as he was, that he never prevented his wife and children from following their religion,' etc. Mother said: 'Well, Mr. W., you will have no objection if we say a prayer for you?' 'Oh, no,' he answered. She knelt and recited the Litany of Jesus, oh! with what unction! Shortly after Mr. W. asked to be admitted into the Church, and died a most edifying death after a long and trying illness.

"On another occasion Mother was looking for a house on one of the small streets, where a poor man was sick. Some children saw her looking for the number and said 'The sick man lives there, Sister!' She entered, and a nice woman met her in the hall and said, 'I think you must be making a mistake'. Mother said the children told us he lived here. The woman answered: 'It is true there is a very sick man here, but I am afraid that he would not see you; he is a bigoted Protestant. I am a Catholic, Sister, but I have very little education, and I do not know how to argue; I simply pray for him.' Mother went in, and she saw by the man that he was black (not in colour, but in heart), and very ill. She spoke a few words; the tone of her voice was as a note of a well-tuned instrument; she said nothing of religion, she mentioned God and His goodness. This man was in comfortable circumstances and a Freemason. When

leaving, Mother said, 'We have a call in this neighbourhood; would you like us to come in again?' He said yes, but it meant, 'I do not care'. Several times again Mother called, and had the pleasure of seeing him die a holy death. He suffered intensely, and could not suffer enough to atone for the past; he renounced Masonry and offered his life's sufferings and death to God.

"Another of her calls was an old woman, a convert, 85 years old, who was suffering for years from internal cancer. She was refined, but very poor. She could have every comfort if she renounced her religion. Her daughter, a woman about 40 years old, took care of her. They had two rooms, kept scrupulously clean. Mother was a frequent visitor there. The smell from the disease was very offensive. Nothing consoled Mrs. J. so much as a visit from Mother and one of her lovely prayers; she used to say so impressively for her the offering of suffering, 'O my God, I offer to you all I have suffered, all I am now suffering, and all I have yet to suffer in atonement for my sins,' etc. When any of the other Sisters called on Mrs. J. she would say, 'Mother Russell's daughters are welcome, very welcome; but no one's visit is like hers'. Many a time she would slip off her underskirt and give it to some poor needy creature, take out her handkerchief and wipe the sweat off their brow. Her charity was Godlike and her patience was like to that of the Spouse whom she served so long and faithfully. She listened and appeared so interested in the tales and sorrows of the poor; she loved them in and for God; she denied herself in order to help and give to them. She frequently told me that, no matter what she gave, God sent her its equivalent or gave it on the double. No matter how disagreeable the subject was, or the tale confided to her, she never showed disgust or appeared wearied. I never saw her impatient or angry, and no matter how often one would go to her she never showed any displeasure; one was always welcome to her time and advice. I remember being on eight visitations with her on one Good Friday in the early '80's; she was fasting, of course; all very poor people, except one.

This exception was a very wealthy gentleman, who was very ill, and his most devoted wife was his nurse. Mother's manner to the seven poor cases was as respectful and attentive as to the rich; she really loved the poor of Christ."

The following example of her thoughtful charity seems to deserve the preference before countless others that must be passed over:—

"She was a very poor beggar for herself and her works, but quite eloquent when writing for others. I remember the case of a woman who was in good circumstances in the early days of San Francisco. This person had a daughter who was to be married, and the mother had not means to procure the outfit; she came as usual to our dear Mother, and that good Mother wrote a touching letter to a very wealthy lady, whose only daughter was about to be married, saying what a blessing the mother's charity would bring on the future bride, if she (Mrs. W.) helped to make a fellow-creature happy, and how probably she knew the mother of the one for whom she was begging, when she was in very different circumstances, etc.

"I made the remark to her, 'Would she stop at nothing? Was it in marriage she was now taking part?' When the good lady responded generously with quite an elegant outfit, even three pairs of lovely kid gloves, the good, dear Mother took the greatest pleasure in displaying them to all the Sisters and asking their prayers for the kind, generous donor, and for her daughter, who was soon to be a bride. The bridegroom was not a Catholic, but she had the happiness of seeing him a good practical one in a short time. I am sorry to say that he was not spared for this world, but trust that he now enjoys the happiness of Heaven. R.I.P."

Another illustration of this tenderness of heart may be found in an extract from one of Mother Baptist's letters:—

"The Hospital keeps pretty well filled, notwithstanding the open opposition from many quarters. A young woman died here some time ago of consumption; death was at hand when she came, but the good priest who sent her said it was a charity to take her, though nothing could be done, if it

were only to give her a few hours' quiet before death. The poor soul had close quarters, and her two children were pulling and pulling her all day long, and their noisy plays were distressing to her. She lived only a couple of days. When the poor, desolate husband brought the little ones to the funeral, she looked so nice in her coffin, the children did not seem to know she was dead; the eldest, about 5 years old, said to her father: 'Mamma's not coughing now. She's not sick now'; and she kept going from the coffin to the father, evidently puzzled; but when the last prayers were said, and the undertakers put the lid on, she burst into tears and threw herself into her father's arms, 'Why did you let my mamma die? O papa, why did you do it?' The poor man could do nothing but cry; and indeed many present were also moved to tears. It was as touching a scene as I would care to witness, and we see many such. What a sad thing was the wreck of the 'Drummond Castle'! No wonder the bed of the ocean is called the largest cemetery in the world."

As another revelation of this tender heart, I will give a letter written in one of her last years to a young girl who was confined to bed by a disease of the spine:—

"My Dearest Gussie:

"I think you must have made the prayer of St. Augustine your own—'Here burn, here cut, here do not spare, but spare me for eternity'. Your mother tells me your sufferings are greater than ever. God's will be done. He promises to fit the back to the burden, and I am sure He will not fail to increase His grace and strength in your soul as He increases your pains, and then, dear Gussie, a moment of pain will be followed by an eternity of joy.

"Your dear mother, father and sister suffer at the sight of your sufferings, but do not let that grieve you. God will sustain them, and even reward them for all they suffer, and by being conformed to His will you will draw down many blessings on them. I do not fail to place you daily in the tender care of the Mother of Sorrows, but you know it was not God's will that she should have the consolation of assuaging the

pains of her Divine Son, and it may be that she sees it is more for God's glory, and your real good that you suffer more, and knowing you desire only God's will, she does not relieve you. But never fear, she will support and strengthen you; so, dear Gussie, do not lose courage. What you have gone through is past for ever, but the merit of it is before you.

"I missed your letters, and I am glad Mother has broken the ice. I know she will write again, hurried though she be. To-morrow will be the feast of St. Joseph. I give you special prayers on that day and during his octave. I don't ask you to pray for me, just one aspiration. May God continue to bless you, my dearest Gussie.

"Ever yours affectionately in J. C.,

"Sr. M. B. Russell."

Three years earlier she wrote to Gussie in a true Christmas spirit ten days before the feast.

"San Francisco, 14 *Dec.*, 1893.

"My Dear Gussie,

"Knowing you have to act 'Santa Claus' for the little people, I send you this box of different things to help to sustain the Saint's good name.

"I trust, dear Gussie, you are a little easier, a little improved; still, whatever God allows is for your good, so continue to say often, 'God's holy will be done'. One such act of conformity in time of trial is, according to St. Augustine, more meritorious than thousands of acts of love when all goes smoothly.

"I hope your dear mamma is well. Give her my love and best wishes, and your papa, too, the same. Ask them to pray for me sometimes. I need not say a few lines, when you feel able to write, will give me pleasure. Wish all a happy, holy Christmas for me. Have you still a sister with the Sisters of the Holy Name? I hope Louis and Lander continue a comfort to their parents, and Joseph also.

"Ever, dear Gussie, yours affectionately in J. C.,

"Sr. M. B. Russell,

"*Sister of Mercy.*"

CHAPTER XII.

INFLUENCE OF HER CHARACTER.

The following is a sample of hundreds of similar instances of Mother Baptist's wide-spreading influence that are known and of thousands that are unknown :—

"A missionary priest, one very much interested in conversions, met, while visiting San Francisco recently, a lady whom he found to be a convert of many years. Having asked the cause which led her into the true fold, she replied: 'Several years ago while crossing the bay in one of the ferry-boats, my attention was attracted by a crowd, talking quite excitedly. My curiosity being aroused, I made some inquiries. The object of the scene was a small friendless girl who was travelling alone. She had no home in the city nor friends to whom she could go. A suggestion was made that she be taken to St. Mary's Hospital. The Superior of that Institution was known to be a kind lady, who would doubtless have pity on the poor waif. Feeling deeply moved with compassion for the homeless child, I offered to conduct her thereto. Never shall I forget the welcome that awaited us—the homeless one was received with open arms by Mother Baptist Russell. Immediately preparations were made to make her comfortable. No mother could have done more nor shown more tender pity than this good Superior did for the poor forsaken child. This, I said to myself, is true Christian charity. It was then the seed of my conversion was sown, but it took many years and the cross to fructify it. At that time I had wealth at my disposal. Time and circumstances brought a change into my life. It was a trial bitter and hard to bear, particularly so for one without religion. In my desolation I sought comfort from my friends, but, alas! in vain. It was then that the foregoing

incident recurred to my mind. Serious thoughts took possession of me. I asked for instruction and was in a very short time received into the Fold, of which Mother Baptist had been to me the beacon light.'"

There was no dearth of objects for Mother Baptist's charity even in that rich young land. Writing in March, 1894, she says :—

"I think I mentioned the crowds of unemployed men in this city for the last five months ; 589 at our door for breakfast yesterday. We had to employ a second baker. Some good people send flour, coffee and sugar. It is going on since October. About Christmas the number was over six hundred for a few days."

And on the last day of that month, writing to her Sisters in Kinsale about the Golden Jubilee at their convent, she refers again to this less cheerful subject :—

"You heard already of the hundreds who come to us daily for food. I regret to say the number is not lessened, but, thank God, we continue to get the wherewithal to give them every morning a pint of coffee and dry bread. Thirty barrels of flour, 300 lb. of sugar and 100 lb. of coffee came to-day from the good man, James Carroll, who sent a similar supply two or three times already. Mrs. Peter Donahue sent fifty dollars, and young Peter Donahue a hundred dollars for the same purpose. Others helped, but these are the largest benefactors. The number of men this morning was 658."

One of her spiritual daughters, whose recollections go back to the year 1871, when the school of "Our Lady of Mercy" was opened, speaks of the manner in which Mother Baptist fascinated her young pupils in the class of religious instruction which she reserved to herself. "As a school girl I revered her as a saint, and never changed my opinion. I never knew any one who so closely portrayed the life of our divine Lord. We loved her to give us our religious instructions, and this duty for many years she reserved to herself, although she had innumerable other calls on her time. The Bible stories she told in such a fascinating way and so earnestly that we were deeply impressed, and the Scriptural

quotations were so often repeated, in appropriate places, in the course of her instructions, that we learned them without any labour; in fact, it was the lesson we most loved. Many of the early pupils of the above-mentioned school became religious—some have already won their crown, some are still working for it; but I feel all would unite with me in attesting that they owe their vocation, under God, to the beautiful 'Gospel lessons' she impressed on our young minds. We all loved her, she was so gentle, kind, and interested in our sodalities, entertainments, etc., and gave us such encouragement."

This witness ends with an opinion which is supported by many of the extracts that we have given. "Her most remarkable virtue, I think, was charity; and this she tried to impress deeply on our young minds. Her charity was unbounded. She loved the poor, and could not even read of their wrongs without shedding tears, she had such a tender heart for all in affliction."

One of the notes taken by Mother Baptist in one of her Retreats touches on this subject and some kindred topics:—

"A true Sister of Mercy, a true child of our beloved Foundress, must have a very special love for the poor, as that is the spirit of our rules. Let us not forget His tenderness to sinners in our own necessary intercourse with the inmates of the Asylum, etc., etc., and in the schools, above all, let us win the young hearts to God by our gentle kindness and interest to all, carefully avoiding favourites. We can scarcely understand the serious and evil consequences of unkindness to children, especially when accompanied, as it generally is, by a display of temper. It embitters the young mind, and does not convince it of the wrong it has done; but rightly enough the child considers the religious is in fault. Often it drives the child to the public school, or, if not allowed by its parents to go there, it lessens the influence of the Sisters in general: and, when the child is an old woman, the sting too often remains. When she becomes a mother herself, can we expect her to impress her children's minds with esteem for religious or to make any effort to send her little ones to them

for instruction? What a string of evils one person's want of the right spirit may entail! Above all, religious are under a certain obligation of praying for those under their care, which is but too little considered, I fear, by many. In this country and this century, when 'Liberty' is the cry in every mouth, the training of youth is a laborious charge; but when we see them so soon throw off the yoke of their parents, though the laws of God and man and even nature itself teach submission to them, we need not wonder that they rebel against *us*. Can I ever be sufficiently grateful for the blessings I enjoyed in childhood? Never, never. May God be praised!"

As this is one of the very few spiritual notes of Mother Baptist's that have come into our hands, we may join with it some of the others. Thus in the Triduum which closed the year 1886 she prayed this prayer:—

"My God, I thank You for pardoning me so often. Give me grace to be faithful to You, inviolably faithful to You, hereafter. I do not ask for fervour nor delight in Your service, but only the grace of fidelity to You in all things; this is all I ask, all I desire."

Here are three other very practical notes:—

"We know this to be true, humility is not a solitary virtue, but includes many. For are not the really humble also meek, gentle, laborious, patient, docile, obedient, cheerful? In short, do they not possess every virtue? And why not? Does not the Scripture assure us 'God giveth His grace to the humble?'

"Our nature inclines us to ease and comfort, and we must be on our guard lest under pretext of necessity we indulge it by unnecessary sleep, rest, etc. But, as it is an obligation to preserve our health, it is best to be guided on this point as on all others by obedience, always mistrusting ourselves when we side with natural inclinations.

"Our rules are the expression of the Divine Will in our regard; can we then deceive ourselves by thinking we are fulfilling this obligation while we are negligent in the observance of the duties prescribed by our rules? Among our duties those regarding the immediate service of God are too

often the very ones we are inclined to curtail or perhaps even neglect altogether. Considered in one sense, all the duties prescribed are of equal importance, and our holy Foundress puts meals, recreation, etc., on a par with Mass, lecture, etc.; but as our own sanctification is our primary object, and as without God's help (which is chiefly obtained by prayer) we can do nothing meritorious, we must therefore see that our spirituals are to hold the first place, and Superiors will be accountable to God if they do not afford their subjects time to discharge the devotions that are of obligation. But it is, generally speaking, our tepidity and not real want of time prevents us giving the prescribed time to meditation, etc. If we yield to the suggestion of nature and the enemy of our perfection and remain in bed for every slight cause, we are necessarily hurried to get through with our duties, and the personal one, 'Meditation,' is the one to suffer. Then again our infidelity (though we may excuse it) is sure to deprive us of the fervour and unction we might otherwise experience, and so the duty is irksome and we leave it sooner than absolutely obliged."

Internal evidence shows that it was before Sacramento ceased to belong to the Archdiocese of San Francisco that Mother Baptist wrote this undated letter to her "dearest Sister Mary Regis," who no doubt died several years before herself :—

"Your letter this morning made me shed tears of holy joy. The sentiments you express of entire and loving abandonment into the hands of God's providence are just what I most wish for you and for all of us. If it were God's will, we would no doubt be glad to have you stronger, so that you might continue longer to labour for His glory; but if He is pleased to call you from us, I trust it is that your appointed task is finished and the reward at hand. For we cannot doubt but that He who rewards the giving of a cup of water, which costs neither labour nor money, will amply reward the exertions you have made, in spite of weak lungs and a hot climate, to instruct His little ones in the right way. If we were more numerous, and if this climate was not evidently

more trying on you than that of Sacramento, we would probably take you down; but, as it is, manage yourself as best you can, taking and asking for anything in the way of nourishment and rest that will help you to keep up, and arranging your duties with the same object. If you can change a duty with a Sister occasionally, ask her freely: for instance, though you had better for a time keep the management of the Children of Mary, spare your voice and don't instruct, but select a book for one of them to read while you are there, or get Sister Mary de Sales to give the instruction."

This letter is unfinished on the one leaf that has reached me. The page ends with no signature, and on the back of it the following verses are written in imitation of type:—

Father, the cross Thou layest on me
I Thy child most humbly kiss,
Nor would I, though choice were given,
Ask for any one but this.

Give me only grace to bear it
Calmly, humbly, cheerfully;
Then whatever Thou may'st send me
Will be welcome unto me.

Blind, unworthy, faithless atom,
How can I presume to choose?
Or Thy gift, All-wise Creator,
Venture madly to refuse?

I, who, if Thy grace direct not,
Know not what to ask or shun—
Oh! my tender, loving Father,
Not my will, but Thine be done.

"Thy will be done" was the motto on Mother Baptist's profession-ring; and one of her favourite ejaculations was always, "May the most just, the most high, and the most amiable will of God be in all things done, praised and exalted above all for ever!" Another was, "We praise and adore Thee, O Divine Providence. We resign ourselves to Thy holy will."

One of her sisters in religion says that Mother Baptist could not speak of the Passion of Our Divine Lord without being moved to tears; and she thinks that she shed tears every

time that she prepared for confession. It is needless to say that all through her life she was in a very special manner devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. Every new house she founded was a new home for our Sacramental Lord, where He was sure to be faithfully served and fervently adored. The Sister whom we have quoted several times says in a letter, "I have just been reading your little book, 'Close to the Altar Rails,' and a passage about 'Jesus of Nazareth passing by' brings the dear Mother very near to me. For several years, perhaps twelve, it has been my very happy privilege to accompany the priest with bell and candle when he takes Holy Communion to any of the Sisters or patients in the hospital. I always told Reverend mother beforehand on these occasions that Jesus of Nazareth would soon pass by. I can see her even now raise her calm, lovely eyes heavenward, and a moisture of love would gather in them; and then she would pray a silent prayer, and then a smile and fervent 'God bless you,' would send me rejoicing on my duty of love."

An old pupil of Mother Baptist spoke lately of her religious instructions, especially about Holy Communion, and her manner of reading the sixth chapter of St. John, which this lady still reads on the eve of Holy Communion, while she recalls her beloved Mother's instructions and the very tones of her voice. We may pass on from this subject, after inserting one of Mother Baptist's notes of a certain Annual Retreat:—

"No wonder the good Father expressed his appreciation of the beautiful instruction of our holy Foundress, on the Blessed Sacrament, contained in our Holy Rule. But he was especially struck with the wisdom of her words, 'In all their difficulties, troubles and temptations, the Sisters shall seek comfort and consolation at the foot of the altar.' Not (as nature too often would incline and Satan always prompts us to do) from our Sisters, to whom we cannot confide our troubles, difficulties or temptations without almost certain injury to them as well as to ourselves. If we are wise, we will seldom, and better still, *never* open our minds on the trials we meet except to our Superior and Confessor, and not even to them

until we have with filial confidence talked it all over to our sweet, loving Lord who awaits us day and night in the Tabernacle and says as He did in the Scripture: 'Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy burdened, and I will refresh you'."

In putting these notes together, I have, perhaps, dwelt too exclusively on Mother Baptist's personal qualities to the neglect of her work. Those especially who live on the spot, and know the details of the subject far better than any one at a distance can know them, will claim that I have not chronicled the beginnings and the developments of the various institutions which her prudence allowed her zeal to undertake. The history of St. Mary's Hospital would, by itself, form an interesting volume. Before, however, attempting a brief account of these charitable enterprises, space may be found for a few more of those personal tributes that have come under my notice.

As far back as the early 'sixties, a good man, long since dead, Mr. Michael Robert Ryan, of Temple Mungret, Limerick, repeated to me the opinion of a sea-captain who had brought his vessel up the Shannon and had come to Mr. Ryan, either as Mayor of Limerick at the time or consul for some foreign country. During his previous voyage this gentleman had called at San Francisco, where he saw and heard enough to make him speak to a stranger of Mother Russell as already "a power in the States". But much more valuable is the testimony of one who had better means of judging than this sturdy captain can have had. Father Peter O'Flinn, S.J., who died at Melbourne after twenty-eight years of zealous work in Australia, was for some time a member of the Jesuit community at San Francisco. He writes thus after her death:—

"I wish that a true 'Life' of her could be written and published, for, if it were composed with a full knowledge of her and her works, I think it would be useful and edifying to all of us. Mother Baptist appeared to me to possess the qualities of head and heart, natural and supernatural, to fit her in an eminent degree for the office of Superioress. So well and so satisfactorily and so successfully did she perform her part that she was selected for that post six times, or rather,

I should say, as often as the rules permitted. Many were the virtues, amiable and admirable, that adorned her character and conduct. But one in particular, or rather a combination of them all, made her administration unique and pre-eminent. In the large community of nuns and in the various establishments connected with the convent—the hospital, the industrial school, the home for destitute girls, and the Magdalen Asylum, all under her charge—everything was carried out with such perfect order and suavity that there was no clatter, no rushing, no confusion, no collision. Everything was done with the precision and smoothness of clockwork. So much so that an eminent politician said one day, 'She could govern the United States better than most of our men'."

Another priest, who knew Mother Baptist in a mere passing way, visited San Francisco in quest of funds for the completion of the new church at Omagh. The Mother Superior of St. Mary's Hospital might well have pleaded her own pressing wants as an excuse for not contributing to so remote an object; but it seems she did not. "Mother Russell impressed me," writes Father McGlade, "with her business-like air and quiet power, and her conversation and demeanour served still more to strengthen that impression. Her kind sympathy and charitable disposition, as evidenced in my own regard by a substantial subscription to the object of my mission, showed also that underneath the solid, firm exterior which made her a fit ruler for the largest hospital in San Francisco, there lay hidden those interior virtues which befit the model religious. It was these qualities that made her name a household word all over San Francisco and secured for her many remarkable manifestations of confidence and esteem."

A still more competent witness is a member of Mother Baptist's Community, who attaches no signature to her very simple deposition.

"I knew Rev. Mother Russell for years. During that time I could not fail to notice that she was a perfect religious, schooled in the practice of every virtue, but remarkable above all for unbounded confidence in Divine Providence, forgetfulness of self, and consideration for others. When I was in

Sacramento, being but a postulant and unaccustomed to the climate, I felt the heat very much and was not slow in expressing my feelings in regard to it. Rev. Mother took in the situation at once, but instead of correcting me there and then for my want of mortification, as another would have done, she said nothing, but presently adopted means to make me feel cool and comfortable. When the Sisters went into retreat—it was my first—the kind Mother feared the eight days' silence would be too much for me, so she said: 'My dear, whenever you see me disengaged, come and speak to me'. Glad of the chance, I obeyed literally, and though I went so often, she never manifested the slightest shade of annoyance and always received me most graciously and did all in her power to cheer me and make me happy. One conversation I had with Mother some time previous to her death impressed me very much and serves to show her beautiful spirit of forbearance. I cannot remember her exact words, but the substance was as follows: Speaking of zeal, she said, that, if we remembered how patiently God waits for the repentance of sinners, we would be more patient with those who do wrong. We cannot force people to do right. God does not do so. How easily He could stop all the evil-doing in the world! But He chooses rather to suffer it and wait long for the good proceeding from man's free will."

Mother Austin Carroll, who died in 1909 at her convent in Mobile, in Alabama, whose "Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy" we have quoted more than once, said in a private letter: "The greatest quality Mother Baptist possessed was, I think, an inexhaustible charity and compassion for those who needed help and sympathy, for orphans, for all." And in another letter: "I never enjoyed any period of my life more than the time I spent with her at San Francisco; and she used to say that she thoroughly enjoyed the time she spent with me in New Orleans. The Sisters were delighted with her, she was so gay, so full of anecdotes, and such a delightful addition to our little company at recreation. She petted the orphans whenever she met them, and preferred to stay at the Orphan Asylum. As a story-teller, she was unique. It

seems to me that I regret her more and more every day." This last allusion to Mother Baptist's skill as *raconteuse* suggests the remark that here again she took after the parent to whom she was often compared. Her mother resembled the lady whom Mr. Thomas Arnold describes in his recently published "Passages in a Wandering Life". She was noted for her powers of conversation, which was that of the old school—more dignified, correct, and deliberate than has for many years been the fashion. In her stories and anecdotes, Mrs. Russell would sometimes *encounter* a person and *accost* him where her young listeners would be inclined merely to meet and speak to him. In this feature of her story-telling and conversation Mother Baptist seems to have hit on a mean between the styles of the two generations—less Johnsonese than the elder, less slipshod than the younger.

Mother Austin Carroll did not wait for Mother Baptist's death to praise her. As far back as "Shrove Tuesday, 1882," writing from New Orleans to Mother Emmanuel Russell of Newry, she speaks of both her sisters, the dead and the one then living still:—

"You may well be congratulated on having Mother Baptist Russell for your sister. It would not surprise me to hear that she wrought miracles, and, if you knew me, you would learn that, though I take rather mild views of people in general, I am hard to be pleased in my saints. And, as I am under obligations to that dear holy soul, let me tell you, if ever I can oblige you, command me, for it would give me great gratification to serve any one whom she loves. This is a great deal more than I would venture to say to herself. I said a good deal on the same subject a few days ago to Father Theobald Butler, S.J., who is provincial of the Jesuits in the South. We were speaking of "The Irish Monthly," of which I take six copies, one for each of our branches, and he spoke of Father Matthew Russell with great interest and affection. 'If he is only a little like his transported sister,' said I, 'I can readily believe all the good things you say of him.' I had the pleasure of meeting your sister Mary Aquin (R.I.P.) at St. Mary's of the Isle, Cork, in 1854, I think. I had just

received the white veil—she too was a novice—she was next to me in the refectory and I had charge of her, so we had time to become great friends. I had a sincere esteem for her. We had a General Communion for her here when the news of her death came. So, my dear Mother, you will be good enough not to regard me as quite a stranger."

The following extract from one of Mother Baptist's own letters throws some light on her character. It was addressed to one of her branch communities on 16 February, 1890:—

"You must all pray that God will bless us, and all try to be extra good, exact and pious this Lent. Of course fasting from food is not included in the good things, but cheerfulness at duties, exactness, charity, silence, attention and fervour at prayer, etc. At our last meeting I said a good deal on the evil of repeating remarks we may have heard to the person of whom they were made. It is no palliation of the fault, or at least very little, to say, 'We did not divulge the name'. If the one of whom the remarks were made, and to whom they are repeated second-hand, has the heavenly wisdom to take no notice further than to humble herself and resolve on amendment, if culpable, it would do her good instead of harm, and the chatterer would be the only one injured; but unfortunately some persons do not alone feel hurt, but express their displeasure, never cease till they find out who made the remark, or perhaps settle on one that is innocent, and will then rake up the faults of this person, as if that would lessen their own guilt, and their poor minds become embittered and disturbed all from the unguarded tongue and their own pride. Now I do not know that this applies to any of you, but it is no harm to be forewarned; so think it over, and you will be less likely to fall into this serious fault. I also spoke of the evil of curiosity and inquisitiveness. Let us think of St. Paul's words, 'I know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and Him crucified'. Well, my dear Sisters, God bless you all."

The preceding year Mother Baptist wrote a Christmas letter to one of her branch houses, in which among other wise and cheery things she says:—

"I know you will each do all in your power to contribute

to the general happiness during this joyous season, and that you will make good use of the quiet three days to lay in spiritual strength for the coming year, and repair the rents caused by your struggles during the time that is past. You can renew your vows in concert as we will do here, that is, you (Sr. M. Nolasco) say the words aloud, and the others join you. I hope you are keeping a good fire, and that those who have cold feet, which I dare say all have, get a jar of hot water in their bed at night. We are not so mortified as to wish to be kept awake all night with cold feet. Our mortification must be bearing with all that is disagreeable in each other, labouring hard with stupid, wilful children, accepting humbly the thanklessness of their dissatisfied parents, and the many other disagreeable things we meet with in our daily life. All this is true mortification, and very pleasing to God, besides showing more of a really mortified spirit than any corporal penance we could undertake."

She ends her motherly encyclical thus:—

"Now, my dear Sisters, one and all, may God bless you, and may you be every one more pleasing to our sweet Infant Saviour than you ever were, and you know that means may you be meek, loving, humble, laborious, forbearing, etc. Let us pray fervently for each other. I hope that you have a little Crib, and that you will be happy in God."

The description that one of the poets of her adopted country, Colonel John Hay, gives of a certain Sister St. Luke, needs to be modified in order to suit Mother Baptist:—

> She lived shut in by flowers and trees
> And shade of gentle bigotries.
> On this side lay the trackless sea,
> On that the great world's mystery;
> But all unseen and all unguessed
> They could not break upon her rest.
> The world's far splendours gleamed and flashed,
> Afar the wild seas foamed and dashed;
> But in her small, dull Paradise,
> Safe housed from rapture or surprise,
> Nor day nor night had power to fright
> The peace of God that filled her eyes.

Her convent home lay between the trackless sea and one of the capitals of the great world. She made it her earthly Paradise, but it was not particularly small and certainly not dull. The poet comes nearest to her at the last; for neither night nor day nor any event, agreeable or untoward, could disturb "the peace of God that filled her eyes". More appropriate to our Irish-American nun is the fine sonnet of our Irish Catholic poet, Aubrey de Vere :—

A trancèd beauty dwells upon her face,
A lustrous summer-calm of peace and prayer;
In those still eyes the keenest gaze can trace
No sad disturbance, and no trace of care.
Peace rests upon her lips, and forehead fair,
And temples unadorned; a cloistered grace
Says to the gazer over-bold, "Beware,"
Yet love hath made her breast his dwelling-place.
An awful might abideth with the pure,
And theirs the only wisdom from above,
She seems to listen to some strain obscure
Of music in sidereal regions wove,
Or to await some more transcendent dower
From heaven descending on her like a dove.

It is written of St. John Berchmans that his laugh was rather seen than heard; and almost to the same effect one of the notes about Mother Baptist tells us that "she rarely laughed outright. She would smile. She had an inimitable smile by which she could express ever so much fun or pleasure as the case might be."

Quietly and solidly happy herself, she was constantly striving to promote the real happiness of others. Her thoughtful kindness for every one in any sort of trouble was untiring and inexhaustible. She did not shrink from relieving the necessities that appealed to her in the way that most persons find most irksome—namely, by procuring from others the means of doing so. She had no scruple "in asking good Mr. Carroll for sufficient cash to pay a certain person's way on the cars (his railway fare) to Los Angeles and to get him a few underclothes". And when good Mr. Carroll (God bless him) sends fifty dollars for the purpose,

she writes from the asylum to some Sister, that "twenty dollars is sufficient for the trip, five or six in his pocket, and with the rest get him what you see he needs most to make a decent appearance when presenting himself".

The following extract from another of her letters shows how fearless she was in asking others to do great acts of charity. There are some of us who well might grieve, not only for the good we have failed to do ourselves but also for the good that others have failed to do through our pusillanimity in shrinking from asking them to do it:—

"My own dear Charles seems to prosper in every way. I only hope God is not allowing more success than is good for his eternal interests. His 'Woes to the Rich' are frightful. As charity is one of the chief means of turning riches to good account for hereafter, I must [then she suggests certain charitable works]. I must also find out if he has sent a piano I asked him to send to our poor Sisters in a very poor place in England." This last sentence speaks well for both brother and sister. It is harder to ask another to do a charitable deed of that sort than it would be to do it oneself if it were in one's power.

CHAPTER XIII.

FOUNDATIONS AND CHARITABLE WORKS.

We cannot, however, glance through these letters any longer, but must keep our promise of giving some account of the institution that Mother Baptist founded and the charitable works that she carried on.

Praise be to God for all the good, known and unknown, that has been wrought for the glory of God and the salvation of many of His human creatures through the gentle and modest ministry of the Sisters of Mercy in California since New Year's Day, 1855, when the newly arrived Sisters visited for the first time the County Hospital of San Francisco. How many fervent Communions, how many devout Visits, how many holy Masses, since January 3, 1855, when an altar was erected and the Blessed Sacrament was brought for the first time to the small house in Vallejo Street, which was their first home, before they removed on 3 March following to a larger house in Stockton Street!

In an early portion of this sketch a slight account was given of the first beginnings of St. Mary's Hospital, of which the foundation stone was laid by Archbishop Alemany on 2 September, 1860, when, as the stone itself recorded, Pius IX was Pope, James Buchanan was President of the United States, and John G. Downey, an Irishman and a Catholic, was Governor of the State of California.[1] In the stone, along with many interesting documents and holy objects, was deposited "some clay from old Ireland".[2]

[1] The first Governor of this State, Mr. Peter H. Burnett, became a Catholic also and wrote "A Lawyer's Way into the Catholic Church".

[2] It was completely destroyed in the terrible earthquake and fire of 1906. A much finer hospital has since been erected in a more suitable quarter of the city.

Even when St. Mary's Hospital rose to its full height from this foundation, it was far short of the completeness which it had attained on 8 September, 1891, when Mother Baptist described it to her aunt, a Sister of Mercy in Dundalk.

"Every one says the Hospital is very perfect. There is every convenience that could be imagined: electric bells and lights, speaking tubes, a passenger elevator, chutes for soiled clothes, letters, dust, etc., etc. The three principal corridors are 200 feet long with large triple windows at each end; there are thirty-five private rooms, about a dozen of which are double, and there are eighteen wards, but none large—the largest only accommodating twelve. The bath-rooms, water-closets, and lavatories are all nicely tiled, both floors and walls, to the height of six feet; and the basins, slabs, etc., are marble. The house is heated throughout by steam. But the grandest part of all is the mansard story, in which the operating rooms are situated. There are two antiseptic rooms, the ceiling, walls and floors are tiled, the basins and slabs marble, and they are so constructed that the whole can be hosed out, and the water flows to one corner and runs off down a marble gutter. The operating tables are heavy plate-glass in nickel-plated frames. The ophthalmic and electric rooms are furnished in hard wood with oilcloth on floor. There is a large waiting-room off which these rooms all open. We have got the attic hard finished, and one end is for the female employés, the other for the male. The operating rooms are placed between them and only reached by the elevator. There are three flights of stairs, one in our end of the building. We have better and more ample accommodation than formerly, the chief thing being fine offices for the Superior and Bursar, which we needed much. All this, of course, has increased our debt, but I have no doubt with the blessing of God we shall pay it off in due time. We have an elegant suite of offices—a dining-room, drug-store, and a private parlour for the doctors on the first floor; also parlours and a very neat mortuary chapel from which the funerals take place without being obliged as formerly to go from the hall door. Altogether, our place is now very complete."

How many happy deaths has St. Mary's Hospital secured for poor creatures that turned to God sincerely at the last! Mother Baptist's letters for forty years are full of consoling instances. Space cannot be afforded for any of them, but we may refer to one who was not a patient but a physician at St. Mary's. If Dr. Robinson had not attended at St. Mary's professionally, he would hardly have died a Catholic death under the striking circumstances described in one of Mother Baptist's letters.

"He was a good man, and God rewarded him with the true Faith. Many times we feared he might be carried off suddenly without having taken the final step, and Mrs. R. suffered great anxiety on this account, for she understood the precarious state of his health; but, as I dare say you have heard, he had the grace to call for the priest when he found himself sinking on the train, although surrounded by Protestants. And indeed, no Catholics could have behaved better than they did. They got the car, in which the doctor was, detached from the train, and they brought the priest from the town at which they stopped. After the priest had paid him a long visit in private, the gentlemen were summoned and knelt (not a usual thing for non-Catholics) while the last Sacraments were being administered, one of them removing the doctor's socks. When the priest had taken his departure, the poor doctor said to those present, 'Now, thank God, I have received the Sacraments of the Catholic Church, and if you can only bring me home to die, it is all I ask'. The poor man expired when only half-way on his journey. It was a terrible shock to his wife, but all the bitterness was gone when she thought of the wonderful grace accorded to him."

In another letter, after telling about a young man who had applied for admission into the French hospital and then into the German hospital and had been refused because manifestly in a dying state, but who was admitted into St. Mary's and quickly prepared for his first Confession and Communion, as Baptism was the only sacrament he had received, Mother Baptist goes on to say: "Our doctors don't like our taking these dying cases in, as it necessarily makes our death rate

high; but what do we care for that? Many souls are saved, and they will pray for us."

Mother Baptist was not much more than a year at work in San Francisco before she was asked to send out a colony from her infant convent. The first branch house was Sacramento, then a part of the diocese of San Francisco. On the feast of St. Joseph, 1856, Archbishop Alemany, in honour of the saint, whose feast was that day celebrated, and still more in honour of the Blessed Sacrament from which the city took its name, begged that some Sisters might be sent to look after the neglected children of Sacramento. It was while accompanying her young Mother Superior thither, on her first visit of exploration before yielding to the Archbishop's entreaty, that the venerable Mother de Sales caught the fatal malady mentioned towards the beginning of our narrative, which made her the proto-martyr of the Californian Sisters of Mercy; for at that time the journey, which can now be made in three or four hours by rail, took a day and a night on the deck of a miserable steamer on the Sacramento River. A colony of five Sisters was led forth by Mother Baptist in October, 1857. In spite of many vicissitudes and even catastrophes, the Sisters have carried on successfully their various works of mercy for more than forty years. The community, perhaps reluctantly, became independent of the Mother House when, in a rearrangement of the ecclesiastical geography of the Pacific Slope, Sacramento was taken from San Francisco and joined to Grass Valley. It has superseded the latter in giving its own name to the See now occupied by Dr. Thomas Grace, who lately succeeded Dr. Manogue, himself the successor of Bishop O'Connell, the first Bishop of Grass Valley—all Irishmen, like their metropolitan, the Most Rev. Patrick William Riordan, Archbishop of San Francisco.

The first offshoot that was independent from the start was the convent of Grass Valley. Our account of this foundation will be confined to a letter of Mother Baptist's which we shall give nearly in full, though it touches on several other topics besides our present point. The letter is dated "Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, Grass Valley, Nevada

County, California, 20 September, 1868," the eve of St. Matthew.

"To-morrow being the feast of your holy patron and not claimed by any one nearer or dearer than yourself, you shall get all my day's doings, good and bad, and I trust the former may predominate. It seems to me it is unusually long since you wrote, but I believe the Retreat season is a busy one with you. It would astonish you the number of Retreats your Fathers here are called on to conduct. The late Provincial, Father Congiati, told us more than once that whatever community might be disappointed we never would, and you must know we require three, two for the Sisters and one for the penitents. You recollect Father Raffo; he gave our first Retreat this year, Father Calzia the second, and Father Neri the one for the penitents. We say truly the Jesuits are the greatest blessing we enjoy in California. God bless them everywhere.

"I have given you above my present address in full, not that I expect you to send your reply to this place. I came here this day three weeks and hope to leave this day week. My throat was somehow a little troublesome, and the doctor said a short time in this pine district would be beneficial, and so it has, thank God, both to me and my two companions, Mother Mary Gabriel and a young professed Sister who claims your holy founder for her patron. This is a real primitive country place and we can do here what would be unusual elsewhere. For instance, we three, and three of the Grass Valley Sisters, went on Monday morning after breakfast out at the rear gate at the Boys' Asylum and in five minutes found ourselves in a primeval pine forest through which we wandered *ad libitum* a few hours, resting occasionally and not meeting a living creature save a few cows with bells on their necks and some birds, lizards, and such like. The morning was cloudy, for which reason it was selected, as usually at this season the sun is very hot. We were not home over an hour when loud rolling thunder was heard and plenty of lightning also, soon followed by heavy rain, which was welcomed by every one and has made the country sweet and fresh since.

"Though thirty-four years in California, it is only this week I saw a mine. You may be sure we did not descend the shafts, but we saw the cages ascending and descending with men and rocks, and saw the whole process required for getting the gold from first to last; and surely it is no wonder it is valuable, for it costs great labour. The process would be too tedious for me to explain in writing, but truly it is interesting. Some sad accidents occur. The employed are obliged to change their clothes before leaving the building, and are examined, fearing they might secrete valuable specimens; and to the honour of our holy Faith it is a fact that never yet did a Catholic attempt such a thing, though that cannot be said of Cornishmen. Yet the latter get the preference, the present proprietors being nearly all Protestants. The two mines we visited are the Idaho and North Star; the former goes a perpendicular depth of 1600 feet, the latter goes only a depth of 600 feet, but runs over 1800 feet, following the ledge of gold-bearing quartz. There is in each a machine for forcing fresh air into the mine. I am bringing several specimens to our cabinet.

"Now I must tell you about this establishment, which was our first filiation. It is twenty-five years since it was started, a mere mustard seed; now it is a large institution, including an asylum for orphan and half-orphan boys (about eighty-five in number), one for young orphan and half-orphan girls, and a third for the more grown girls, amongst whom are the children of families living in remote districts where no good schools are to be found; the girls in both mount up to pretty nearly two hundred. Ground is not so valuable here as in the city, so they are not stinted. It would delight you to see the boys chasing each other through the pines, or playing ball, etc. The whole enclosure of six or seven acres is left free to them. The Sisters find it costs less to buy fruit and vegetables than to cultivate them."

We need not give the rest of the letter except this phrase: "I was told lately I look as young as I did twenty years ago. The truth is I never looked young."

Other California centres of activity for the ubiquitous and

indefatigable Sisters of Mercy have been established at Rio Vista, Ukiah, Red Bluff, Eureka, Los Angeles and San Diego, but not directly by her whom we have called the Pioneer Sister of Mercy in California. In San Francisco itself, however, and its vicinity she founded several distinct institutions which with God's blessing will continue to do each its own beneficent work, on through the twentieth century and beyond it. It is a blessed thing to have any part in the foundation and maintenance of good works of this stable and permanent kind. What a magnificent alms to suffering humanity! Such benefactors of their fellow-creatures, such co-operators with their merciful Creator, must for all eternity have a glorious share in the promise, "*Their works follow them*," especially when that text is amplified by the dictum of human wisdom, *Qui facit per alios facit per se*. In this sense Mother Baptist's work goes on.

At the request of the Rev. William Gleeson the Sisters opened a school at East Oakland (then known as Brooklyn) July 2, 1877. Some eight years later an addition was built for the accommodation of boarders in Our Lady of Lourdes Academy. Here and in the other schools there are flourishing Sodalities of the Children of Mary, etc. In San Francisco they have large schools at St. Peter's, Alabama Street; Our Lady's Home for Aged and Infirm, Rincon Place, with some 130 inmates, and adjoining this house the Mater Misericordiæ Institution where young girls and servants out of employment are taken care of. The Magdalen Asylum in Potrero Avenue has saved and sanctified many a sorely tried and tempted soul through all these years, as it will (please God) through each year of the coming century or centuries.

From the Mother House itself, St. Mary's Hospital, the Sisters go out to visit the jails, House of Correction, City Hospital, and also the sick in their own houses. And besides the blessed routine of these organized ministrations of charity they have always been ready to lend their aid in meeting sudden emergencies of disease or want not unknown even in that favoured region. Thus in a letter of 6 February, 1894, Mother Baptist writes to her sister in Newry:—

"There is great distress among the working classes here and everywhere. About five hundred men are coming daily for something to eat. We give them coffee and bread. We have twelve dozen tin cups; when these are served out, they are dipped into a pail of water and used again. The poor men stand in the open air in a long line, two abreast, and we hand the coffee and portion of bread out of the window. It is considerable work serving so many, but we are thankful that we are able to do it. Of course, we get help. A poor young man hired a room last week in Third Street, and, after cutting off all marks from his clothes and destroying all papers and anything that could identify him, shot himself, leaving in writing that he did it rather than beg, and he could get no employment. I trust we may be the means of preventing such an act. But workmen and tradesmen are not provident; they spend every cent they earn on dress and amusements beyond their rank in life." [And then the drink! the drink!]

The Home for the Aged on Rincon Place did not satisfy the zeal of the foundress. Her darling project of a separate and adequately equipped institution for this object, on which her heart was set, was never to be realized in her lifetime. Her correspondence through a full score of years is full of allusions to her hopes and plans. For instance, we see in the following letter how far she had gone towards realizing her designs as early as the year 1881; and this helps us to understand her bitter disappointment at not being able to begin the building during the many years she was still to live. This letter was written to a lady who had been obliged to take a situation as a governess in a Protestant family in some very out-of-the-way part of the country. As there are some characteristic touches in other parts of the letter, we print it almost in full. It was a fine act of charity to write thus at length to a poor lonely lady among strangers, one who seems to have been known to Mother Baptist only through having appealed for her temporary hospitality while out of employment before this undesirable situation was offered to her.

"26 *June*, 1881.

"My Dear Miss ——:

"Your big letter was received on the morning of the 23rd. I kept it until evening, when Mother M. G. and I sat down and enjoyed it together. I say enjoyed, though we sympathize with you in your hard trials, and more than once tears were in Mother's eyes. I did not think such bigotry existed, but she tells me it is not much better in her part of Humboldt County. It arises from ignorance, and, when Catholics become more numerous, it will gradually disappear. But you have found a haven at last. The tender thoughtfulness displayed by placing all the Catholic books and pictures in your room was the only point that touched the soft spot in my heart. I pray God to bless your newly found friends. What inducement have people to settle in such a country as you describe, or how did they find out such a place? Truly this puzzles me.

"Your description of your horseback ride adventures reminded me of myself. My dear old father (the Lord be merciful to him!) considered riding a part of our necessary training, and when mere children we began on a donkey, but I never had courage to go farther; so when the other girls were sporting on horseback, the quiet donkey did for me, and the quieter he went the better I was pleased, as I always had a book open before me. At last one day the poor brute got tired of my listlessness, and down it lay and I on its back. My poor father saw me in the distance, and, when I got home, said he supposed I had better give up riding, and so I did, and I am sure I would make a greater fuss than you did if obliged now to try it.

"You say little of your eyes. I am so glad that you have so kind an amanuensis as Miss G. It will be one of the most improving exercises you can prescribe, so beg her to write as often as she can, and it will save your poor eyes. We did wonder we were not hearing from you. I hope you got the few letters we sent.

"You will be glad to hear Sister M. Francis is busy about the new home; not exactly the building, but preparing the

ground and the plans. She has over thirty men grading for over six weeks, and probably six more will not see all finished.

"We are rejoicing at one great blessing God has accorded her—a good well. Two weeks ago the men struck a good vein of water at 136 feet depth. All the money you send I will lay up to secure you a home in the new building, so that you will feel independent. I often told you we did not hold you accountable for the time that you were here, except that you are bound to pray fervently for God's blessing on us all.

"When there are so few Catholics in your part of the world, you have, of course, no priest and no sacrifice. How I pity you! But God is everywhere, and you are doing what seems to be your duty in the order of Providence. I will hereafter send you a 'Monitor' as often as I can, or some Catholic paper. I see you get other papers with political news.

"No mention is made in my family letters of my brother's being made successor to Forster, but unless it was a certainty they would not mention such a thing.[1] I am far indeed from wishing it for him; but, as God elevated Esther to the throne for the good of others and not for her own benefit, so it may be the Divine Will to make use of my poor brother for some wise end, and if so, provided he is true to God, all will go well. So far, mixing with the world has not lessened his fidelity to his religious duties, thank God! but pray for him. He is only 49 this October, and he has ten children.

[1] This rumour, I think, never gained currency at home. But Charles Russell had some connexion with Mr. Forster's Irish career at the other end. A few days after he had at a third trial been returned to Parliament for Dundalk, he wrote a letter to the Press, urging the expediency of making some statesman of high standing Secretary for Ireland, and naming Mr. Forster. When the new Chief Secretary was starting for his difficult campaign, he said to my brother, half-seriously, "Remember you are responsible for me". Another Irish appointment for which he was really responsible was that of first judicial head of the Irish Land Commission. He wrote to me at the time: "You are right in your conjecture about John O'Hagan. When I saw Gladstone, Hugh Law was the man he had in his mind."

"Now I have dashed this off in double quick time, so your dear pupils must not take this as a pattern to imitate.

"Ever yours in Jesus Christ,

"Sr. M. B. Russell,
"*Sister of Mercy.*"

The ground, however, on which Mother Mary Francis Benson had those men employed for six weeks was for some reason pronounced unsuitable for the site of the new Home, though some progress seems to have been made, for in the following year (13 April, 1882) Mother Baptist writes to the same correspondent:—

"The work on the new Home is stopped for lack of funds. In God's own time it will get on."

But God seems sometimes to our impatience and ignorance to work very slowly, and, when eleven years had gone by, Mother Baptist wrote to her sister, Mother Emmanuel, 2 August, 1893:—

"I told you some time ago about a lovely spot we had set our hearts on for the Home, Peralta Park. Well, the Archbishop did not approve of it, so we gave it up. The location was grand—such a fine view of the bay, Golden Gate, Yerba Buena and Alcatras Islands, etc., etc. This very thing, however, was objectionable, as it thus gets the full benefit of the winds and fogs; but it so happened that we went on an exceptionally lovely day. We have since bought five acres in Fruitvale, a suburb of East Oakland, and intend, please God, to build there in time. Our reasons for selecting this place are, first, the climate, which is mild, and, secondly and principally, we are within a few hundred feet of a church belonging to the Franciscan Fathers, where our old people can have the advantage of numberless Novenas and devotions of all kinds. Besides, religious priests are usually more numerous than secular priests, so we are not likely to have any difficulty about securing daily Mass, paying a certain amount annually, of course. Until we dispose of the property we purchased so long ago for the Home in this city, we cannot think of building, and at present everything here is not

dull, but dead. Crowds of people are out of employment, and several of the banks are closed."

Again, after more than two years, she writes to the compiler of these notes, 7 December, 1895 :—

"Business of every kind is depressed and taxes are extra heavy ; so, contrary to our expectations, we are getting no contributions to the Building Fund of the new Home. We are consequently resting on our oars for the present. When I hear of the amount expended for useless decorations, as at young Mackay's funeral and at Miss Vanderbilt's wedding, I am half provoked. At the last 120,000 dollars' worth of cut flowers. It is almost incredible, but even here 500 dollars for a pall of violets has been paid more than once. We are in California forty-one years to-morrow, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and the day Pius IX proclaimed it a dogma of our Faith. Dear old Mother de Sales threw a miraculous medal into the mud as we drove from the steamer to St. Patrick's Church and begged our Blessed Lady to take us under her protection; and no doubt she preserved us from many dangers, notwithstanding our shortcomings. Ask her to help us now to finish the Home; it is too long on the Hospital premises for the good of either institution, and I could wish (if God's will) to see the new and permanent building erected before I retire from work, and you know my years cannot be many. So, pray, and God bless you."

We have given considerable space to this holy project which has since been realized; because it claimed a large share of the prayers, hopes and aspirations of many of Mother Baptist's late years. She loved the old people, no matter how disagreeable they were or how crotchety. She always found excuses for them, and whenever she had time, she visited them and read for them. The notes that we are here following add that she never worried over money matters, and always said that God would provide for His own ; and so He did. "The only thing for which I ever heard her express regret (says one of her Sisters) was for not being able to build the Home."

Our last reference to this subject will be a note furnished

by another of the Sisters, from which we will not omit the opening sentences, although they are here irrelevant :—

"Being asked on what she made her particular examen, she answered, 'On the presence of God; Father Maraschi, S.J., told me to make it on this twenty years ago'. God was indeed present with her at all times and in all places. In her exterior devotions nothing out of the ordinary was apparent. She always looked on the call of duty as God's voice, and it became her prayer. Nothing could disturb her peace of mind, for she had implicit confidence in Divine Providence; every occurrence, pleasant or unpleasant, was gratefully received and treasured because it was His will. How she did long to see the Home for Old People erected! For years she had been planning, etc., about it. A few years ago she purchased a very large 'Crucifixion' and several other pictures to help on a poor artist—also a stained-glass window, to assist another poor artist; and all these and many more things she had stored away to adorn the chapel of this Home. Never will I forget the expression on her face the day (a few days after she was stricken down with her last illness) that the Archbishop visited her. He had promised some time before to call and come to some decision about proceeding with the building. She had been daily expecting him. Her speech was gone, but she was perfectly conscious and showed how pleased she was to see him; but I imagined I could read in her face, 'Ah, you come too late. I cannot talk with you now.' After he left the room, she raised her hands upward and with her eyes expressed perfect resignation."

The last work of the kind that the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in California was just barely allowed to finish was St. Hilary's Sanitarium. The well-being of this wretched tenement of clay, which the soul inhabits, has a marvellous share in the efficiency of God's poor human creatures. Mother Baptist had for many years felt the necessity of having a place outside the city, and yet easily accessible, to which she might send the Sisters that needed a few days' rest and change of air after their long confinement in the hospital wards and closely-packed schoolrooms. Dr. Benjamin Lyford,

a distinguished physician, who had for some years given up the practice of his profession, owned an extensive estate in Marin County, along the shore of an inlet of San Francisco Bay, from which he generously invited Mother Baptist to select a portion suited for her purpose. He even pressed her to come at once (it was the summer of 1897) and occupy with some of the Sisters one of his cottages, so that she might on the spot judge of the climate, etc., and might then, if satisfied, choose her own lot, which he would give for nothing. Accordingly she writes to Sister Mary Euphrasia from Bay View Cottage an idyllic epistle, reporting that "Sister M. B. is enraptured with this place, and truly for a summer resort for the Sisters, I doubt if it could be equalled. Not a sound but a cawing of the crows morning and evening. Yesterday a rabbit or a hare came into the kitchen, and, as we were sitting in the front last evening, a whole family of quail walked down the road within fifty feet of us. If we were only any way smart, we could trap plenty of game while here." It is a quiet retired spot, free from fog and malaria, the air balmy and yet invigorating. It commands a magnificent view of the bay with San Francisco in the distance. Mother Baptist commenced a comfortable little convent, which she called St. Hilary's, because "Hilarita" was Mrs. Lyford's name. Mr. Gilmour, the contractor for the work, was a Protestant; but before his contract was completed, he had expressed a desire to be instructed in the Catholic faith and is now a good practical Catholic. Let us pray that the same grace may be granted to the generous donor of St. Hilary's.

Sister Rose writes on 20 November, 1898: "Just think! After all Mother Baptist's preparation of the new house she never slept one night in it." When all was ready, the message came from a brighter and a fairer home: *Omnia parata sunt, veni ad nuptias.* After she was taken away, her mourning daughters were in no hurry about the blessing of St. Hilary's, which did not take place till 13 May, 1899. Father Valentini, the Rector of Sausalito, recalled in his sermon that thirty years before he had met Mother Baptist in the pest house, where she and Sister Mary Stanislaus and others, all

gone to their reward, were nursing the smallpox patients, and he exhorted the listeners, her spiritual children, to strive to copy her virtues, especially her charity, her humility, her zeal, her peaceful calm, her meekness and forgiveness, and her firm trust in Divine Providence.

We must now begin to think of bringing our story to an end, though we have made very inadequate use of the materials placed at our disposal. Besides the long European letters, we have had the privilege of reading many of the shorter and more scrappy and gossipy notes that were sent from one to another of the houses in California. In all these the writer's prudence and charity shine forth, her kindness and thoughtfulness, her desire to help every one who needed help of any kind.

Her habit of commending her friends' necessities to the compassionate heart of the Mother of Sorrows is thus referred to in a letter to a friend in Ireland. She writes: "It may please you to know that one of my constant practices is to recommend all my dear ones to our Lady of Dolours earnestly every day, and generally by name; and certainly you and yours are never forgotten. We have a life-size painting of the Crucifixion over our altar, with our Blessed Lady and St. John. The Madonna is very beautiful, and it is to her specially I pray for you all, and for some other anxious mothers, whom I promised to pray for."

The following is a testimony paid by one of the Californian Sisters of Mercy to the virtues of her beloved Mother:—

"Her knowledge of Scripture and of the Lives of the Saints, and indeed all her spiritual knowledge was very great. Her instructions were exceedingly practical, and it is certain she always practised what she preached. She was generally one of the first in the Chapel in the morning and one of the last to leave it at night. When duty or charity did not detain her, she was without fail at all the common exercises of the community. I never heard her say, 'I had not time to finish my prayers'; they were always said at the right time. Her spirit of prayer was wonderful; she lived and moved in and for God. It required no effort for her to speak of Him; she seemed always recollected.

"In 1881 we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Order. Early in that year she wrote to the different houses of the order for statistics of the different houses, of their works, members, etc. She intended having them all collected and had printed headings of the different works of the Institute. These she intended to be collected and bound and to send a copy to the parent house, Baggot Street, Dublin, and also to the principal houses of the Order.

"Mother was willing to bear all the expense and take all the trouble solely for the good of the Order. She loved everything connected with it and revered the Institute. She was in every sense a true Sister of Mercy.

"Her respect for priests was profound; many a needy one she helped substantially. She always spoke of and to them with reverence. She never resented an injury, nor would she ever allude to a slight that she had received. She possessed a spirit of labour; no work was too menial for her. I often saw her scrub, wash windows and help those who seemed extra busy. I never heard her command; if she wanted something done or wished one to go on the visitation, it was, 'Could you do so and so for me?' or 'Would it be convenient for you to come out with me?' etc.

"Many a time she called the writer and whispered, 'The Lord loveth the cheerful giver,' if she would see in the face a shade of worry or perhaps a clouded brow or a slight frown. How she pitied the relapsing sinner or the one who failed despite many resolutions! Her advice was, 'Rise again, no matter how often you fall.' 'If a child in running falls, it does not lie on the ground, but rises quickly and goes on again until it reaches its destination. So we must do likewise,' she frequently said.

"When she did a kindness for any one, or helped one in any way, she would never mention it, nor would she wish any one to allude to it. To the poor she was more than generous, especially to those who had seen better days. To such her offering was always placed in an envelope, which she would slip into their hands when saying 'Good-bye,' showing the refinement of her generous heart. She frequently

said that God never let her feel the loss of the charities she dispensed; and these were incessant and (considering her resources and her needs) very great. She could not refuse any one who asked her for charity, or see any one needing food, clothing, etc. She would deprive herself of necessaries. On many occasions she took off her underskirt to give it to some poor creature, and she would take from her wardrobe the garments meant for her use. No matter how badly any one treated her or how ungrateful persons were, she never resented nor spoke ill of them; in fact, I never heard her speak in the least uncharitably of any one, nor show by her manner that she resented any slight. All did not act towards her as she did to them. Rev. Mother was always planning pleasures for her spiritual children. She was always anxious to relieve and to make their occupations light. She never asked any one to do what she was not most willing to perform herself. I never heard her express a wish that she would like this or that with regard to food, clothing, etc. Very many times I asked her when she was ailing at any time if there was not something she would desire. 'No, dear, I have everything I wish.' I often said: 'Why, Mother, you will spoil those who attend to your wants. You never give an order; you do not tell them to make your bed so and so.' She would answer, with an endearing smile: 'How can I, when everything is done so willingly and well?' Yes, she thought every one was good, like herself. She often said that we ought to feel a pleasure in being forgotten or overlooked by others. She never raised her voice; her tone in speaking was low but very distinct. Her manner of reading was charming; one would never tire listening. In reading of the sufferings of others she would always shed tears. Many a time when she would commence some touching part, I would say, 'Now, Reverend Mother, please take out your handkerchief to catch the tears.' . . . She loved Ireland with a deep, ardent and undying love."

CHAPTER XIV.

LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH.

And now for the great act of dying. Death did not come as an abrupt surprise for our Pioneer Sister of Mercy in California. Every day of her life, we might say truly, had been not only implicitly, but explicitly, a preparation for death. Her letters are full of allusions to death; nothing austere or melancholy, but very cheerful, though very serious. She made herself at home with the thought of death: for, like the "Great Good Man" of Coleridge's fifteen-line sonnet, she had

> ——three treasures, life and light
> And calm thoughts equable as infant's breath,
> And three fast friends, surer than day or night,
> Herself, her Maker, and the Angel Death.

In Mother Baptist's letters there are many descriptions of death-beds of various Sisters, some details of which have a pathetic interest for those who know what her own death was to be.

When some of the community were proposing plans for a certain Sister's Silver Jubilee, still at some distance in the future, their Reverend Mother wrote what might have been written of herself nine years after: "Certainly we will do everything in our power to honour the day when it comes; but who can tell how many of us will then be in the land of the living? Let us learn a lesson from our poor dear Sister now lying in the infirmary. [She began her letter by saying, "Our dear, kind-hearted, devoted Sister Mary Agnes is to all appearances near death."] Not a prayer can she say, not a look can she cast on her crucifix. Even when Father Prelato called and tried to rouse her to consciousness, she

could give no sign that she had even heard him, though it is possible she may know what is going on. She has not opened her eyes since she was anointed. It is indeed little we can do when dying. I will send you a few lines each day as long as she is in this precarious state."

The fifth of June, 1888, was the Golden Jubilee of Sister Mary Bernard Hamill, the fiftieth anniversary of her profession in St. Clare's Convent, Newry. Writing to her before that epoch, her god-child says: "The year 1901, if I ever see it, will be my Golden Jubilee. But I don't expect to live so long, nor do I wish it, either; in fact, I wish for nothing, knowing that the very thing I might be naturally inclined to desire may be the least desirable for me, so I have no wishes whatever, except to be a good religious, and for that I beg your prayers always. May God graciously hear all the prayers offered for you on your Golden Jubilee, and may eternity be for you one long jubilee of love and praise."

Writing in anticipation of another Golden Jubilee—that of Mother Gertrude, of Kinsale—she refers to her own. "You know I will be fifty years in religion next November, if I live so long. Dear Mother Gabriel and others wanted me to celebrate my Golden Jubilee then, but I objected. I think they feared I might not live for my jubilee of profession; but if I do not, I will, please God, be sooner in heaven. Though life is precarious, and I am perfectly indifferent on that point, I am inclined to think I will see 2 August, 1901, which will be my Golden Jubilee."

This long letter, which we have not yet done with, ends with these words: "And now, once more, farewell, my ever dear Sister, until we meet in the everlasting jubilee of heaven." A strange expression coming after her allusion to the year 1901; but it was nearer the truth, for she was stricken down two or three weeks afterwards, and this seems to be the very last of her letters. This circumstance adds solemnity to the frequent references which it makes to death. "I intend sending you a sketch of our cemetery with the names of all our dear departed. Our dead form a goodly company.

"It seems to me we lose more in proportion to our number than any community I know—forty-five in not quite forty-four years—and the climate is good, proverbially pleasant, and we give them good food and plenty of it; but the doctors have many times said that the air breathed in the schools, home and hospital was not the best, as we know very well; but we rejoice at having now a quiet little spot by the seaside, where we can spend a week or two in turn during vacation, and have salt-water baths. I enjoyed it so myself in the early part of last summer; but, as I got some serious or rather alarming attacks in the fall, no one will hear of my venturing near the water again."

Later on, in the same letter, she adds:—

"One of the Sisters, seeing the dead the chief subject of my letter, remarked that it was scarcely a suitable subject for a jubilee letter, but I know you are like myself, thinking more of the dead than of the living, and among our dead are some very dear to you, so I think you will not object to all I have said.

"I must tell you about myself. I do not know whether you heard of the rather alarming attacks I had many times last fall and winter. They have almost disappeared, and, as I sleep well, eat well, and am not allowed to do much, I am getting fat; but that does not make long life any more certain, as we see day after day; so I must try to be prepared, should God call me out of life suddenly. I therefore recommend myself earnestly to your prayers, and, as you are naturally expecting your summons before long, I will not fail to recommend you often to St. Joseph, the patron of a holy death. In our infirmary at the asylum we have a picture of that saint, with Our Lord on one side, and the Blessed Virgin on the other. No wonder he is invoked for that great and supreme blessing of a happy death.

"The last Sister we lost, Sister Mary Cecilia, was not long ill, about ten days, but very sick from the first. It was that fatal pneumonia that carried her off. When scarcely able to articulate, I could hear her repeating, though half raving:—

O Mary, when I come to die,
Be thou, thy spouse, and Jesus nigh.

"Indeed, all our dear departed had enviable deaths, thank God! I love to reflect on some of them, they were so especially holy and edifying."

What we may call Mother Baptist's special devotion to death was shown, most of all perhaps, in some letters addressed to her half-brother, Arthur Hamill, of whom mention was made towards the beginning of this sketch. He himself was very faithful to the memory of his deceased kindred and friends. When his youngest brother became a priest, he would often say to him, "Remember the dead"; and, when All Souls' Day came round, he would draw up each year a list of those whom he wished to be commemorated at the altar. When he in his turn was lying on his death-bed, his sister wrote of him, 27 July, 1884:—

"Why should we desire to retard his happy entrance to the kingdom of God? He has had a long life, being 70 last April, and has, I trust, earned for himself a happy eternity. Often since I saw something of the world, I have reflected *with admiration* on what I recollect of Arthur, his wonderful respect and submission to our Mother, his devotedness to *us* young ones, and the repeated journeys he took on Saturdays from Dundalk merely to spend the Sunday with us in our quiet old-fashioned home in Killowen, instead of enjoying himself with young people of his own age." Judge Hamill lingered so long that more than a year later Mother Baptist wrote the following letter, a strange one to send to a man of the world, so much older than herself that he had been appointed the guardian of her and her brothers and sisters on their father's death.

"St. Mary's Hospital,
"San Francisco, 25 *October*, 1885.

"My Dearest Arthur:

"At first I thought I would not bother you with a letter, and so addressed dear Mary, who will, I know, write to me in return; but now I am adding a few lines to yourself.

"So death has sent you 'three warnings' that he will call for you some day. Please God, you will not be found unprepared, and so you do not dread his approach. I met some time ago a few sweet lines on death which I would copy, could I now lay my hands on them; but the substance was that we should welcome death as an angel; for he alone shows us that *man is immortal, the soul can never die.* Still, being the penalty of sin, there is a certain solemnity about death that makes us naturally shrink from it, and it is this very fact that makes so pleasing to God our entire conformity to His holy will. Like every one, you feel, too, having to be separated from those you love; but this separation is only *for a time.* We shall all, please God, be reunited in eternity. You willingly allowed Mary and the girls to go to Germany, etc., etc., believing it was for their happiness and benefit, and looking forward to the pleasure of meeting them again. In like manner you and they must rather anticipate the happiness of being reunited in a blessed eternity than dwell on the necessary separation in time. You used to have rather too stringent ideas of the preparation required for Holy Communion, but you must lay that view aside and avail yourself of every opportunity of receiving Holy Communion and dwell, not so much on the infinite justice and sanctity of Our Divine Lord as on His infinite mercy and love. You have great advantages, dear Arthur, in such a city as Dublin, with dear Mary and Matthew to urge you on in the path of sanctity, and so many grateful, loving hearts praying for you continually. You won't object to my alluding thus to your death, though you are better, thank God, at present, and may be spared a few years. Yet, at your age, we know it must be only *a few;* and, as death is the only means by which we can be united to God, never again to be separated, we should not shrink from it. [After some remarks of a less grave kind, she ends thus]: Another time I will write more, provided you are not *mad* with me for this production. I fear dear Mary will, but I am so familiar with death, I half imagine you must be the same. I pray for you every day, and I promise to pray for you more and more. I

must now stop. Ever, dearest Arthur, your fondly attached and affectionate sister,

"Mary B. Russell,
"*Sister of Mercy.*"

Mother Baptist, before posting this letter, showed it to an aged kinswoman whom she cherished tenderly in her last days. "She says it was a terrible letter to send to a sick man, so I added a postscript, telling Mary to use her own judgment about giving it or not. We are so habituated to the thought of death that it has lost its terror for us; but, as Cousin Kate says, it is different with seculars."

Ten years before, she had given a description of the little cemetery where she herself was to be buried, in the course of a letter of eight huge foolscap pages to "My dear Arthur and Mary," dated 8 February, 1874. After speaking of two deceased friends, she goes on: "May God have mercy on them all! Is it in Glasnevin you have your two darlings laid? It is nicely kept; but the poor old graveyard in Newry, though a sanctified spot, was desolate-looking in the extreme. Here the cemeteries are laid out with walks and trees, and are cheerful-looking; but in general there is too much gingerbread-show about the tombs, etc., for my taste. I wish you could see our sweet little cemetery; it is at the Magdalen Asylum, where we have seven acres of ground. We keep the cemetery green by constant irrigation; without this it would be parched by the long, dry seasons and fresh breezes that keep our summers so cool. We have eight sisters already laid in their narrow homes and four or five of the penitents. *They* have one-half appropriated to themselves, but only those who make their consecration for life are buried there; the others are interred in the common cemetery. We have in it a small mortuary chapel in which some of the penitents say the Office for the Dead on the first Sunday in each month, and in which is a mock coffin with a skeleton (drawing), on top, appropriate pictures and mottoes, as the dead Christ, death of St. Joseph and St. Patrick. All these little things help and interest the inmates whose *world* is limited by the

enclosure and for whom we have to provide every little comfort in our power. You would wonder how holy some of them are, but of course it is the smallest number."

Like very many of the saints and others whom God has asked to do great works for Him, Mary Baptist Russell was blessed with a very robust constitution. She had hardly the slightest interruption from ill-health till the last two years of her life. As far back, however, as December, 1888, she writes to her sister: "I fear Sister Mary Francis's letter may make you more or less anxious about my health; so I will tell you I have since had an examination, and it is found that the first opinion given by the doctor was not correct. My case is not so serious as he feared, and in the course of a month or so I will, please God, be all right. But he keeps me lying either on a lounge or in bed, and has ordered me lots of good things to take, even meat on Fridays! *So my day has come.*"

But her day of life lasted ten years more. On 17 January, 1898, she reports of herself: "At present I am very well; but, as those attacks have come back unexpectedly, I cannot say I am all right. If it be God's will, I should like much to build the Home next summer. Pray for this intention." And ten days later: "I shall be sixty-nine in April. My health has been shaky all last year, and I may say I did nothing during that time but rest and nurse myself. *Now*, thank God, I feel well, and hope to continue so for a few years with the blessing of God." As near to the end as 28 June, 1898, she writes to a friend: "You will be glad, I know, to hear that my health is as good as it was years ago". No letter of a later date than this has come into our hands. Her last letter home to her sister, Mother Emmanuel of Newry, is dated 7 June, 1898: "Mother Austin Carroll says she has not one delicate Sister, in her community of sixty! I envy her. We have many, and I head the list; but I am not suffering in any way. Yet, without any premonitory symptoms, I lose for an instant the power of my right side; and, as long as I am subject to such attacks, I can't say I am *well*. Still I am stouter than ever, and no wonder—for I sleep well, eat well, and cannot go around as much as formerly.

These symptoms ceased for several months, but have returned of late, though I still follow the doctor's regimen." The last words of this last letter are, "I am glad Mr. Fegan [1] has acted so nobly"—namely, in giving at his sole expense to the Sisters of Mercy in Newry, such a Home for the Aged as Mother Baptist had for years desired in San Francisco. However, I find that these last words are followed by a postscript which ends thus: "How grand the workhouses are getting! Nothing will do them but trained and certificated nurses. The world is changing; it must be coming to an end."

It was coming to an end for *her*. In July letters reached her friends in Ireland, which made her loving sister write thus: "I fear they expect her death. Well, she has served God and loved Him all her life, and we must not wish to keep her from her reward. We must bless and praise God for the great graces He has granted her through life; and He will surround her death-bed with them too. He is so good and generous to His faithful servants."

Sister Columba, after announcing Mother Baptist's dangerous state, exclaims: "What shall we do if the good God takes her? I cannot imagine this House and Community without her: she is its heart and its life. She was always ready to help us and make everything light and pleasant: and oh! her charity was really boundless. Her right hand did not know what her left hand did. No one ever saw her angry or impatient—always willing to forgive, no matter how often one had offended. Indeed, she was a faithful copy of our mild and loving Jesus. She lived and moved in and for God. Her charity and sympathy for the poor were unbounded. She always helped every one who applied to her. Her very last direction to me was to send some money to a leper settlement in Japan."

Another of her community (Sister Mary Aquin) writes on 28 July, while they were still expecting her death: "We have prayed hard that God would leave her with us a few years

[1] Father of the Rev. Henry Fegan, S.J. May he rest in peace. His works have followed him.

longer; but He wants her, and we must submit, however hard it may be to our poor hearts. She was a perfect model of every Christian virtue, but, above all, charity in word and deed. Her tongue, now silent for ever in this world, never wounded any one, but was always ready to pour the balm of consolation into the wounded heart. How the poor will miss her! God alone knows what she has been to them during her long useful life." And two days later Mother Columba, her assistant then and soon to be her successor, sends her report to Mother Emmanuel: "Our dear Mother is still with us, but each day growing weaker. Her eyes are dark to this world. Ah! how much brightness she will gaze on for all eternity! She cannot see for the past few days. It is so sad not to hear her voice; and to know that she cannot hear us is inexpressibly sad."

Those lines of an anonymous American poem on the death of St. John the Evangelist were pathetically verified in the death-bed at which we are kneeling in spirit:—

> E'en my lips
> Refuse to form the words my heart sends forth,
> My ears are dull; they scarcely hear the sobs
> Of my dear children gathered round my couch;
> My eyes so dim they cannot see the tears.

Not blind only, but dumb and deaf, the senses one after the other being dulled by that clogging of the arteries of the brain which was the immediate cause of death. Dumb and deaf and blind to creatures and to all outward things; but in her inmost heart, through all those silent hours, doubtless the holy strain went on which had gone on uninterruptedly from her earliest conscious life and which will need little change in heaven. "God's will be done! My Jesus, mercy! My God, I love thee! Thanks be to God!"

And so with all the graces and consolations, sacramental and unsacramental, that can strengthen and gladden the last hours of a true Christian and a fervent religious, the dying nun passed through her tedious but seemingly painless dissolution. "Five weeks (all but one day) of living death." The great change came about seven o'clock in the evening of

5 August, and many of the Sisters stayed with her, praying; but she lingered through the night. A Dominican Father, who was a patient in the hospital, gave her the last absolution and said the prayers for the dying on his way to the altar to offer up Mass for her. He must have been in doubt whether her place was in the Memento of the Living or in the Memento of the Dead. Perhaps she died between the two and shared in both, for the soul passed away peacefully about twenty minutes after six o'clock in the morning of the Feast of the Transfiguration, 6 August, 1898, which was the seventieth year of her life on earth and the fiftieth of her life in the religious state. May she rest in peace, and may my last end be like to hers!

CHAPTER XV.

TRIBUTES AND APPRECIATIONS.

All the public journals of San Francisco, when Mother Baptist's illness showed fatal symptoms, gave minute accounts of her condition day by day, as of one in whom all their readers were interested. The announcement of her death in "The San Francisco Call," begins with these words :—

"No death in recent years has been heard of with greater regret in this community than that of Mother Superior, Mary Baptist Russell, the sweet woman who watched over the destinies of various charitable institutions in this city during the past half century. The tidings of her calm leave-taking of this life will fill with sorrow the thousands who were fortunate enough to meet her and those who have heard or read of her beautiful deeds of charity since her advent in this State. A more lovable character than hers has been rarely found. Her constant aim in life has been to uplift the suffering and the wounded, and in this she was entirely successful."

The other secular journals, also, "The Chronicle," "The Examiner," etc., and, of course, the Catholic organ, "The San Francisco Monitor," devoted several columns to a minute and enthusiastic appreciation of the life and labours of the humble religious. From Saturday to Tuesday thousands visited the convent chapel where she now lay in death, and where in life she had offered up so many holy prayers, made so many fervent Communions, and assisted with vivid faith and tender piety at so many Masses, often two or three in succession, even in the failing health of her last two years. It was remarked by many, that in her coffin she looked thirty years younger than she was. "The throng was so great," writes one of the nuns, "that we were really frightened—at

least *I* was!" Hundreds touched the precious remains with medals, crosses, etc. The scene might remind us of what we read of many of the saints, among populations more impressionable than the shrewd and worldly inhabitants of an American commercial city like the metropolis of the West.

On the day of the funeral, the Archbishop of San Francisco, Dr. P. W. Riordan, celebrated the solemn Requiem Mass in the presence of some fifty of his priests, and as many of his people as the convent chapel could contain, not one-tenth of the crowds that sought admittance. Two hours before the obsequies it was impossible to get near the chapel.

"No dead sovereign," said "The San Francisco Chronicle" (a non-Catholic journal), "ever had prouder burial than Mother Mary Baptist Russell, whose life of self-denial and good works has crowned her in a city's memory."

The farewell words were spoken by the Rev. Hugh Gallagher, S.J., nephew of the good priest who had conducted her to the distant sphere of her labours fifty years before. Her body was then borne to the cemetery attached to her beloved Magdalen Asylum, amidst a crowd that (according to the journalist last quoted) "swelled to such immense proportions that the utmost efforts of the police were barely sufficient to hold it in restraint". An eye-witness states that, when the burial rites were finished, and the crowds had melted away, many still lingered on, more inclined to pray to than for the departed; and persons of all creeds (this circumstance is mentioned expressly) and of different degrees of social standing carried home with them handfuls of clay from the newly-made grave.

The spot in which that grave was made has been lovingly described for us by Mother Baptist herself, in a letter printed in a previous page. St. Michael's Cemetery had always been a favourite haunt of hers, ever since it was blessed, 8 May, 1867. The large Celtic cross, which she had long wished to erect as the crowning consecration of that little garden of graves, has been erected since her death, as a special memorial of the Foundress, and bears this inscription: "In Memory of Mother M. B. Russell, First Superior of the Sisters of Mercy, San Francisco. Born 18 April, 1829. Entered Religion 24

November, 1848. Professed 2 August, 1851. Died 6 August, 1898." Lower down above the base of the monument is this text from Proverbs xxxi. 20: "She has opened her hand to the needy and has stretched out her hands to the poor". A good text surely to place over our "valiant woman," who not only opened her right hand to give alms to those in want, but who, when the sick and suffering presented themselves, stretched out both her hands, opened wide her arms to embrace them, to cherish them, to nurse them back to health, while using a quiet and prudent zeal for the health of their souls. Perhaps Mother Baptist's memorial cross might have borne a second text alluding to her other overmastering passion, supernatural love for little children, especially when poor and destitute. A saint, whose name she bore from the baptismal font—though I think she looked more to St. Catherine of Siena, as her patron—St. Catherine of Genoa complained once to her Divine Spouse: "Lord, You bid me to love others, and I can love only *You*". "Catherine, he who loves Me loves those whom I love." Christ's favourites are little children and the poor; and these also were objects of predilection for His handmaid, Katherine Russell. "Reverend Mother," writes one of the Sisters, "was the children's best and dearest friend. She made it a point to answer all their letters. When hardly able to go, she insisted on being present at the Monthly Roll of Honour."

I have striven to make this account of a holy and useful life as much as possible a mosaic of testimonies more impartial than a brother's could claim to be. And, therefore, I will now bring it to an end by taking a phrase or two from various letters written after her death, both by those who knew her intimately within or without the walls of her convent, and by those who were almost strangers to her.

The one who was nearest to her by birth and likeness of disposition and vocation, though far separated from her by that sublime vocation through much the greater part of their lives, wrote a fortnight after the cablegram had brought us the news of her death: "Glory be to God, He enabled her to do great things for Him, and the purifying five weeks—

powerless, speechless, blind—I trust have left little for the merciful fires of purgatory to do". On 6 November following, one of her own Community writes: "To-day is the third Month's Mind of Reverend Mother's death, and it seems like years since she was with us. I am sure she is happy in the company of her Divine Spouse whom she served so faithfully, and is looking down upon us, and will obtain for us many favours."

And another: "Each day we miss our dear Mother more and more. Her illness seemed but a day, but since the funeral it seems years. I find myself saying: 'O my Mother, will you not intercede with the Sacred Heart for us?' Yes, we feel that she is now enjoying the vision of that God, whom she loved and served so well. She was a saint, and the people revered her as such. During the days her remains were in the chapel thousands came to pay their last respects and to touch her with medals, beads, etc. . . . A few days ago I found a letter which our dear one wrote to me when I was in East Oakland, informing us that our dear Mother Mary Borgia was dying. In it she remarked: 'Once again we have the lesson—do what you can for your soul and eternity while you have health; when we are sick, we can do little, but we then show what *we are*'. I could not but reflect back on her own case. Yes, dear darling Mother showed what she was —the same calm, patient, submissive and resigned spirit she had always shown. She would take whatever we gave her, and by motioning with her eyes or hand show that she wished us to give part of what she was getting to any Sister who happened to be present. This was an old practice of hers."

The author of "Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy," wrote to the author of these leaves as follows: "I have just read a description of the more than royal obsequies of your saintly and eminently charitable sister (may she rest in peace!) and my thoughts turn to you and your loved Mother Emmanuel in Newry as those who feel most keenly and grieve most deeply for the great loss we have all sustained in the death of our dearly loved Mother M. Baptist. For myself, I have no words to describe my grief. Humanly speaking

I could not have a greater loss. For almost two score years we loved each other in God, and interchanged thoughts and mutually sought of each other advice and direction in matters which all outsiders could not readily understand. I never knew a more generous, charitable soul. A sister of ours, who knew her in San Francisco, wrote to me from Pensacola: 'She was one of God's heroines. Her good acts go into the millions.' She is a great loss every way. Being the oldest religious in California as to residence, she was looked up to by all, and her example and influence for good were powerful."

Mr. Richard White, of San Francisco, brother of the late Dr. Dudley White, of Dublin, speaks of having attended the obsequies on 9 August: "The last time I was in this chapel Mother Russell was with me, and I could not but think of something she then told me. One of the nuns was dying in the hospital, another nun of the same family had died a short time previously, and a surviving sister in the world had remarked: 'Well, that is the last of our family who will go into the Sisters of Mercy to die off in that manner'; and Mother Russell added: 'As if anything could be happier than such a death'. Dear Father, I wish I could describe to you how much Mother Russell was beloved by those who knew her, and how much she was respected by every one in the city. In over a quarter of a century that I have been in San Francisco no death of any one in religion has created the profound impression that the death of Mother Russell has done."

Mrs. Margaret Weston, of Philadelphia, had seen Mother Baptist only in a passing way as a visitor from the East on a very sad errand, for she made that long journey across the whole continent only to find that her son had died five hours before her arrival. "Though my acquaintance with her was so brief, I was more deeply impressed with the nobility, humility and loveliness of her character than I was ever before with any one whom I have met. She was so simply, genuinely good. How sad it was to lose her presence and the wisdom of her counsel! May her mantle descend upon her successor,

and may her Godlike charity and contempt of money be an inheritance among you."

I am not sure that the writer of the following, Dr. C. G. Kenyon, is a Catholic:—

"I wish, in the strongest possible language, to express the feeling entertained by thousands of residents of this city of sympathy for the Sisters of your Community, for the loss they have suffered in the death of Mother Russell. During the period of three years that I occupied the position of Resident Physician of the Hospital, I was a witness to her great worth, not only as to her superiority in mental attainments, but in the Christian graces of charity and universal love for suffering humanity. During that time I acquired a feeling of reverence for her that time has not dimmed. Mother Russell was a tower of strength in this city, and her death is a public loss. I beg to intrude upon your sorrow at this time to offer this tribute to her memory."

Father R. E. Kenna, S.J., writes thus to Mother Columba: "I need not tell you how deeply I sympathize with the grief-stricken children of the good, gentle and great-hearted Mother Russell. She was a grand soul, and well worthy to be one of the pioneers of Holy Church in this western land. Gentle as a little child, she was brave and resolute as a Crusader. Prudence itself, yet she was fearless in doing good to the needy, and in advancing the interests of religion. All who met her were forced to admire; and those who knew her best loved her most. It was my happy lot to know her since 1864, and I had many dealings with her; and my admiration and profound esteem ever grew with the years. She was a saintly soul, with a wondrous allotment of common sense and practical zeal. We should thank Our Lord for giving to our young State such a wonderful example of religious virtue and heroic self-sacrifice."

A Paulist Father, the Rev. A. P. Doyle, writes: "I feel her loss as keenly as though she were of my own kith and kin, for she was associated with my earliest recollections of devoted religious work in San Francisco. There are few figures that stand out as prominently as hers in the history

of the past forty years, and fewer still on whose bier are heaped the benedictions of the poor and unfortunate more abundantly than on hers. She goes down to her grave with the consciousness of having rounded out, in the fullest measure, years of usefulness for the Church and for poor humanity. She goes not unattended to her reward. A cloud of witnesses follow her to testify to her very great charity. It will be some consolation to her bereaved children to realize that though she is gone, her spirit still lives and will continue to make fruitful their lives."

Mrs. Mary A. O'Sullivan speaks of the tide of "sympathy that has been poured out by the whole city for the loss of the great, good Mother of the Poor, whom God has taken to her throne in heaven. Ah! Sister, was there ever another like her, so gentle, so tender, so sympathetic, so big-hearted, so gay and light-hearted? And that rich contralto voice, and those beautiful grey eyes; 'tis sure we shall never look on her like again. And now she has left you all, sorrowing and lonesome. But, ah! if we were good Christians, 'tis singing canticles we ought to be that the Bride had gone to her Bridegroom, and is enjoying the happiness of heaven. Little did she have to atone for. Possibly she may have had to say, 'Lord, I loved the poor too much'; and inasmuch as He Himself became a fool through love, He will not have found it hard to forgive her."

Miss Harriet M. Skidmore, to whom the Catholic literature of America owes a volume marked by deep poetic feeling, pure taste and tender piety, paid her tribute to the memory of one of whom she says: "For many years I have been privileged to call her friend, and her death leaves in my heart (as in the almost numberless hearts to whom she was so wonderfully endeared) a sorrowful void that will never be filled until, by God's grace, we shall meet her in the Eternal Kingdom of His Love". Miss Skidmore calls her affectionate elegy *Mulier Fortis*, for she paraphrases the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs which is quoted on Mother Baptist's memorial cross.

The last witness but one that I shall bring forward is

another foundress, in even a stricter sense of that title. Mother Magdalen Taylor,[1] with the co-operation of the saintly and gifted Lady Georgiana Fullerton, established many convents of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God, modelled (with modifications according to local wants) on an Institute founded in Poland by a holy layman, Edmund Bojanowski, who died in 1871. There are convents of this congregation in Rome, London, Blackburn, etc., and in Ireland, at Carrigtwohill, at Loughlinstown Workhouse, and St. Joseph's Asylum for Aged Females in Portland Row, Dublin. Miss Taylor published many pleasant and edifying books, beginning with a record of her experiences as an Anglican nurse during the war in the Crimea, at which time she was received into the Church by the Rev. William Ronan, S.J., who was acting as Army Chaplain. Hence the reference in her letter to her conversation with Mrs. Bridgeman at Scutari :—

"How sorry I am you have lost your dear and good sister! What a long life of excellence hers has been! What a reward is hers for sacrifices made, souls gained, Our Lord loved! I never met her, but I seemed always to know her from hearing so much about her. Mother Francis Bridgeman was never weary of the subject, and so I used to hear of her by the shores of the Bosphorus and in the garden of Kinsale. Your affectionate heart must feel the pang, but the sweet picture of her whole life will console you."

To link three holy souls together that are surely now together, happy with God, let the last testimony of all be borne by Sister Mary Francis of the Franciscan Convent of Perpetual Adoration, Drumshambo, who has been referred to already in these pages as daughter of the first Lord O'Hagan and widow (when she wrote this letter) of Judge O'Hagan, translator of "The Song of Roland" and author of "Dear Land" and "Ourselves Alone".

Dearest Mother Emmanuel,

"This letter should have been written a week ago, but I am sure you will not think it want of sympathy or affection

[1] She too passed to her reward, 9 June, 1900.

which delayed my writing. I do feel very much for you and dear Father Matthew in the sorrow you have had. For Mother Baptist it can only be a cause of joy and jubilation that she is gone to her well-earned reward. Surely no one ever went to God with hands more full of work for His glory, and few have brought more souls to His feet. May she pray for us, or rather for *me* who have done so little. *Your* hands too will be full when your call comes.

"You will be glad to hear that I received all the votes of the community on St. Clare's Day, the anniversary of my coming. Please God, I shall be professed on the 4th of October. I know you will pray for me, dearest Mother Emmanuel, especially during the coming weeks, that I may have grace to make an entire and unreserved offering of myself to God for the span of life that remains to me. I always remember your intentions before the Blessed Sacrament at the time you wish. With fondest love and truest sympathy,

"Ever, dear Mother Emmanuel,

"Your most affectionate in J. C.

"Sister Mary Francis."

Many things might be added, but here we must close. Mother Baptist has taught us her lesson.

"We place Catherine McAuley in the first rank among foundresses; unsurpassed by any of them in varied intelligence, in strong practical sense, in clear insight, and in what seems to us true heroic virtue". What Dr. Orestes Brownson said of Mother Mary Catherine I would dare, within due measure, to say of her daughter, Mary Baptist Russell. Though she did not found a new religious institute, she did part of the work and had many of the attributes of a model foundress, both in heart and head; for both head and heart are needed in those who are called to band together their fellows in some heroic enterprise and so to merit in a transcendent degree the fulfilment of that promise: "They who instruct many into justice shall shine like stars for perpetual eternities" (Dan. xii. 3). God alone knows how many souls have been and will be influenced by the gentle ministry

of Mary Baptist Russell, Pioneer Sister of Mercy in California —how many have been drawn to God by her directly or indirectly, through her own efforts and prayers or through those who worked with her and those who will continue her work. A life and character like hers might well convert an atheist from his hideous creed to a belief in goodness and heaven and God.

PART II.

MOTHER EMMANUEL RUSSELL,

SISTER OF MERCY, NEWRY.

C'est pour garder au moins ta trace sur la terre
Que j'ai continué ce travail solitaire,
  Toujours ton ombre douce et blanche m'a hanté ;
Et dans ce livre, ainsi que dans un réliquaire,
J'ai tenté d'enchâsser, maladroit lapidaire,
  Cette rélique chère et sainte : ta bonté.

LES JUSTES.

LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF DROMORE.

"Ardmaine, Newry,
"1 *February*, 1912.

"My Dear Father Russell,

"It would be a matter of great regret to the many friends of the late Mother Emmanuel if a beautiful life like hers were allowed to pass without some permanent record. It is therefore with extreme pleasure I learn that we may hope to have soon—and from your own pen, as is most fitting—some account of one in whose character the most amiable human qualities were blended with all the virtues that become a perfect religious.

"The name of Mother Emmanuel will not indeed be soon forgotten by the community she ruled so long and with such consummate prudence. The winning sweetness of her disposition, and the beautiful spirit of charity which made her all in all to her sisters in religion, from the youngest to the oldest, will be for them a happy and abiding memory.

"My own acquaintance with her extended over many years. The reverential regard I entertained for her from the first continued to the end unchanged. I had often occasion to discuss with her matters of mutual interest or concern. I had the most implicit confidence in her clear and sound judgment of things, and never once had reason to repent of following her wise advice. She was indeed a rarely gifted soul, and I regard it both as an honour and a blessing to have had the privilege of her friendship.

"Ever, my dear Father Russell,

"Yours affectionately in Christ,

"✠ HENRY O'NEILL,

"*Bishop of Dromore.*"

CHAPTER I.

HER BIRTH.

In beginning a modest little sketch like this, one is tempted to quote Canning's often quoted "Needy Knife-grinder," who, when asked for the story of his life, exclaimed in so-called Sapphic verse:—

Story? God bless you, I have none to tell, sir!

There is even less to be told about the subject of the present sketch than there would otherwise have been, because her life was through its earlier years intertwined with two lives which have been already recorded, and the surroundings and little events of her childhood have been described in the first pages of this book. Nay, she was herself induced to take part in putting together an account of those juvenile days. To her astonishment a portion of her account was printed, though she had only at my earnest request jotted down hastily under very difficult circumstances some simple notes which she expected me to cut down remorselessly, making my own of anything in her sketch that could be of use in the "Life of Mother Mary Baptist". It seemed to me, however, that the closer I could keep to Mother Emmanuel's notes and the more I quoted from them, the better; and I have since had proof of the deep impression made upon strangers by those unstudied jottings. Now, therefore, that I am free to do with them as I please, I think it well to print the whole of them just as they stand. For these pages are intended to make Mother Emmanuel known to the reader, and this object will be gained, not only by giving her account of facts and scenes in which she herself took part, but also by letting her reveal her own sunny nature in her way of describing matters in which others were concerned.

It is a pity, however, that these notes, intended for the inspection of only a single very familiar and confidential reader, must be introduced, if at all, at the very outset, before strangers have had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the writer of them and so learning to take an interest, as I trust they will, in even the most trivial things that regard her. But the notes are concerned with the opening years of her life, and our opening leaves are the proper place for them. I will, however, screen them somewhat from eyes profane by interposing a few other preliminary paragraphs that may test sufficiently the good-will and sympathy of the casual reader.

Although Mother Emmanuel's reminiscences go back to an early date in her life, they do not begin with the very beginning; and I may first supply the earliest date of all, and also a few other omissions, or what would have been omissions if it had been her own story that she intended to tell.

Sarah Frances Russell was born at No. 50, Queen Street, Newry, on 8 March, 1831. Her first baptismal name was that of a cousin of her father's who spent her last years at Columbus, Ohio; her second was chosen for her in honour of the Saint of the next day, 9 March, St. Frances of Rome. When Father Patrick O'Neill—to introduce long before its time a name which the subject of these notes greatly revered—wished, fifteen or sixteen years later, to bestow a slight reward for the services of a most efficient young catechist who worked steadily under him in the Newry cathedral, preparing the children for Confirmation and First Communion, he took pains to procure an artistic little Roman picture of S. Francesca Romana, which after her death I found fastened into one of her books of daily devotion, in perfect preservation after nearly sixty years.

She was the fourth child of Arthur and Margaret Russell, the fourth girl to take possession of a nursery in which no son and heir had yet begun to reign; and on this account her arrival was greeted with mixed feelings, as we are able to state on contemporary authority of a curious kind. An uncle of the little stranger was at that time, though only nineteen

years old, far advanced in his theological course at the great College of Maynooth, of which he was destined in the end to be President for more than twenty years. The news of this domestic event of 8 March, 1831, reached him from Newry with the slowness of those old times; and on Good Friday (which that year was 1 April) he wrote a letter home, which, strange to say, lies before me at this moment more than eighty-four years after date. There are some still living who will take an interest in this youthful relic of Dr. Russell of Maynooth. The faded quarto sheet, which contains as much matter as a dozen of our letters nowadays, begins, not with birth but with death. The youth addresses his sister with the gravity of an old man, moralizing on "the melancholy death of poor George, so young, so suddenly taken off. Oh! how true it is that death is the lot of each of us without distinction of age, rank, or disposition! We have the seed of mortality in our bosom; God alone determines the day and the hour when it shall come to maturity. May God Almighty have mercy on his soul and give strength to his poor father to bear up against the shock. He was, thank God, aware of his impending death, and I trust that, though his call was early and unexpected, at least till a short time before it was given, it did not find him unprepared." Then, after cramming three huge pages (the fourth was left blank in order to be folded as an envelope, on which ninepence postage is marked) the Maynooth student crosses the last page that he may refer to the life that had just begun. "I am sorry it was not a boy. I fully agree with poor little Mary, there are quite enough girls without it." If "poor little Mary" (who was herself to diminish the excessive number of girls by going to Heaven in her thirteenth year) could have foreseen all that her little baby-sister was to do and to be for seventy years on earth, she would have given her a heartier welcome. However, she had no further reason to grumble. There were no more girls. The next time a little boy broke the monotony of the female succession and received the baptismal name of the aforesaid "Uncle Charles". Both uncle and nephew were to be heard of afterwards. The next and last occupant

of that very remote nursery might with a slight change adapt to his own use the line of the younger Racine :—

Et moi, fils inconnu d'un si glorieux père.

It was his happiness and pride to be known at one period of his life as the nephew of Dr. Russell of Maynooth; at another, as the brother of Lord Russell of Killowen.

To illustrate the character of the woman who was God's chief instrument in the formation of some characters that certainly exercised a useful influence on those around them, I will venture to transcribe here some words written for my own eye only, without a thought of any one else. One of the rules drawn up by St. Ignatius for the Society of Jesus bids its members "love poverty as a Mother". Meditating on the first of the Three Vows some day in the year 1904, I asked myself, "Do I love Poverty as a Mother?" and I answered: "I think I do in theory, partly because I had a mother who was worthy of that sacred name. She was not weak or selfish; she loved her children with a true and wise love. No children, I think, of our social standing could be brought up with fewer toys or less pocket-money; but we were thoroughly happy and content. If she saw us cowering over the fire on a cold day, she would say *Tut! tut!* in a cheerful way, as if to upbraid us for being soft and unmanly. But she kept us well supplied with all substantial comforts and in good health; and on limited means she educated us for our work in life and kept out of debt; nay, she gave much money in the incessant driblets of charity and large sums for religious purposes, and she served many people in their need. She never gave a single expensive dinner to friends, but she managed to give them pleasant evenings at our populous fireside, which satisfied the claims that hospitality had upon her under her peculiar circumstances as a widow with a large young family dependent on the prudent usury of a not very large number of thousands."

And now perhaps we have delayed long enough on the threshold, and we may venture to confide to the kind reader, whose patience and sympathy have stood so far the test applied

to them, the memories of those distant days which Mother Emmanuel put on paper three years before her death, with no suspicion certainly that they would ever be turned against herself. It was indeed strange that in circumstances of peculiar difficulty, which will be explained hereafter, she should have gone to the trouble of entering into some of the details which are here found chronicled; but, since she has done so, and since (as I have said before) some strangers have been greatly attracted by the extracts furnished in the biographies of Lord Russell of Killowen and of Mother Mary Baptist Russell, I will give these memoranda consecutively and in full, as I find them in a copy-book written in her excellent handwriting, firm and clear and easily read to the end, even when the writer could not herself see what she was writing.

In order to diminish the temptation to interrupt the story with annotations of my own, it may be well to make one or two remarks beforehand, and to supply a few additional particulars afterwards. In transcribing these notes I have sometimes changed the name which is employed instead of that best and holiest name, "Mother". The childish word Mamma might seem strange on the lips of an old nun, as some would call her, though even to young people she seemed fresh and bright and youthful-hearted and even youthful-faced, to the last. "In everything she did the perpetual youth came out, even in her handwriting; the soul being so fresh made the body young."[1] She had indeed "a young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks," and there is a pathetic sound in this child-like mode of address kept up till the end, when she was older than her father had been at the time of his death, and within a few years of her mother's age when she followed her husband after twenty-two years of strenuous widowhood.

Count Joseph de Maistre attributed to his wife what he looked upon as "nothing less than the eighth gift of the Holy Ghost, a certain fond persecution [*amoureuse persécution*] by which it is given her to torment her children from morning to night to do something, not to do something, to

[1] F. X. G.

learn—and yet without for a moment losing their affection for her." All this holds good of every wise and vigilant mother like the one that is described in Mother Emmanuel's notes. Some of the incidents which she thought it worth while in her last years to record as memories of her first years—for instance, the punishments inflicted by Mrs. Arthur Russell on the eldest and therefore the most responsible of her three little girls—illustrate the firmness with which this wise mother corrected the faults of her children, that unwearying maternal vigilance which lets nothing that is blameworthy escape without blame, while it teaches its stern lessons with an evenness of justice that, along with a wholesome fear, inspires confidence and love. There never was a gloomy day in that well-disciplined household.

Let us now listen to what Mother Emmanuel, in the letter which accompanied this cahier of recollections, called her "echoes of old times".

CHAPTER II.

MOTHER EMMANUEL'S RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY YEARS, TILL HER FATHER'S DEATH.

12 *March*, 1899.

As you so much desire it, dear Matthew, I will try and remember some things connected with our old home-history. Mine will be only an outline; you must put in the lights and shades of the picture that memory presents.

It will be a disappointment, I know, when you have read all, that the dear subject of your memoir only appears occasionally. But, as I said to you, children in our house were not brought out, as the prodigies of nowadays are.

Well, my memory goes as far back as my fourth year, for I remember distinctly Thomas Hamill and the funny things he used to do to make us laugh. A coffin on a bed is one of my early recollections, and that must have been his.[1] It lay in the bedroom on the drawing-room flight.

Our old house in Ballybot I can recall as a very well-furnished one, and each bedroom distinguished by a name taken from its style, such as the white room, blue, chintz, or green room. The fine long hall, good, cosy breakfast parlour, large dining- and drawing-rooms, the kitchen and our own two nurseries—a day and night one. Then the busy brewery yard, full of drags, horses, men and barrels, Newfoundland dogs—Leo and Pompey—and terriers with forgotten names. The garden with apples, the special fruit pictured still distinctly, and the flowers.

Before this house was built by our father, it seems there was a long low house in the middle of the garden, and it was

[1] He died in November, 1834, when the youngest of the family and the last survivor was three months old.

to this he brought home his bride. But I have no memory of that house; only our Belfast friends spoke of it, and old Kitty Murray, Charles's nurse, told me that he was the first child born in the new house.

Our walks to our farm at Carneygat and down Dromalane with the nurse, Mary Murray, Kitty's sister, a boy, and a donkey on which we got a ride by turns, this is among the outdoor pictures: the boy breaking off large boughs of hawthorn blossoms or the ripe haws according as the season furnished them. Our little donkey did duty at other times in a bright blue cart with equally brilliant red wheels, which transported several small children to Miss Cunningham's school in Bridge Street, at such an early stage of my life that I only remember being employed at a garter, taking the stitches from one needle to another and wondering that it never got any longer.

[Here I may interpolate a few remarks. Nothing pleases me more in Fénelon's correspondence than the money and the affectionate message that he sends, when Archbishop, to his old nurse. In this spirit I emphasize the tribute paid in the preceding paragraph to the memory of the good nurse with whom the grateful intimacy of childhood was kept up till her death in holy old age some forty years later—Mary Murray till the end, though she had been for many a year the widow of a good man called Caddell. Her sister and predecessor in office, Kitty Murray, was fond of relating how *her* charge was so cross and fractious that her heart was scalded with him, and she at last brought the vigorous infant and laid him at his mother's feet, renouncing all further responsibility. I do not know how the incident closed, but Kitty Murray remained in the service of the family in a different capacity till her death some forty or fifty years later. At the time of her sister's death, Sister Mary Aquin, "Lily" of the present notes, the second eldest of the four little girls in the nursery with which we are at this stage concerned, wrote to the writer of this interpolated paragraph: "I anticipated Charles's wishes by arranging for a very respectable funeral

at the Old Chapel, which Father James Lowry attended". The "intelligent outsider" will forgive me for sprinkling my pages with proper names that have various interesting associations for many readers. And now we must let Sister Mary Emmanuel resume her narrative, which (I cannot help saying it again) amazes me by its minuteness, written as it was in her old age, in her blindness, and only to be read by me in drawing up a sketch of our sister.]

We were sent to the Cathedral to hear Mass each Sunday and directed to bring home some word said in the sermon, and this duty was very difficult. When I thought I had some word safe in my mind, it would fade away; and, before I could commit any other to memory, to my great distress the sermon would come to an end.

One eventful Sunday, when we all got our halfpence to give at the door, we were tempted to lay it out on "Yellow-Man,"[1] from old Mary Grant's stall at the Ballybot Bridge. We concealed it in our pretty swansdown muffs, lined with pale blue silk. On returning home the same pale silk was of course seen all besmeared with the melted yellow sugar, and our senior, poor Lily, had to bear the punishment. This was that she was sent with Mary Murray back to the vestry to tell the Bishop, Dr. Blake, of her robbery of Church money. Young as we were, we were made to understand that *this* was the head and front of our offending—not punished, as many a mother would have done, for destroying our pretty muffs. Another punishment occurs to me as I write, and again the poor culprit was Elizabeth. For telling an untruth I remember seeing her standing in the large gateway where carts and people were passing in and out, wearing a white sheet or something that served the penitential purpose.

[1] A very luxurious and clammy species of sugar stick. Mary Grant sat in the same spot some thirty or forty years. Once she had a serious illness, and the apple-stand was deserted for some weeks. When she reappeared, my mother in passing welcomed her back, but added: "Now, Mary, wouldn't it have been well for you to be safe out of the troubles of this world?" "Well, ma'am, God is the best judge, and He knew what He was doin' in leavin' me a wee while longer among the neighbours."

So our dear Mother knew how to inspire a salutary fear of sin.

Mary, our eldest sister, was a perfect child and the favourite of all who knew her; but I don't remember her at all, I suppose, because she was so much advanced, as I since heard, in all her studies, and so was not on our level.

These are my chief personal memories of Ballybot, but I can supplement them by what I often heard from our Belfast friends and others. It must have been a very pleasant house, for there were so many young people, our step-sisters and brothers, and those dear Belfast friends, and our uncles and aunts and cousins of our father's, many of them contemporaries of our elder sisters. Newry seems to have been a half-way house from Killough; and many a happy gathering I have heard of, where music, singing, dancing, riddles, round games joined in by all, young and old, made the evenings go past quickly.

In summer we young people were sent down to Killowen for some months, and each Sunday saw two cars full of the seniors and visitors from Newry. Then the crowded little rooms where we, little ones, were disposed of at dinner-time on beds, no room being left at the tables. Old Nelly Crilly's house some summers, and Tom Murphy's (now Mr. Leslie's) other years. Rostrevor was our usual drive from Newry in summer-time, and at the "Big Tree" we halted, and while resting the horse we enjoyed a lunch of fresh cakes (baker's) and cheese got at Kit Ainsworth's, and then home again in our comfortable, roomy inside car.[1]

The reason we left Ballybot was that our dear Father's health began to fail, and the brewery was let advantageously to the firm of Carroll and Darcy. It was then decided that, as Mary and Lily were of an age (12 and 11 years) to take advantage of more advanced education, France would afford

[1] It was characteristic of the *mulier fortis* who was the mother of these children that she patronized this worthy woman (a Protestant) through all her changes of name and fortune as Miss Ainsworth, Mrs. Heany, and Mrs. Calvert. So, in employing tradesmen, etc., she was glad to encourage struggling merit and did not give her patronage to big establishments.

that and be also a warmer climate for our dear Father. But God allowed otherwise. Everything was ready for our departure, even our clothes, etc., packed, when dear Mary took fever and died in the second of the three houses, as our own had been given up.

I remember well that morning. We were all dressed in white and brought down to the back parlour where Mary lay dead, and dear Mamma seated in deep mourning beside her remains. R.I.P. She was a sweet, lovable, clever child, just over 12 years old. Her death occurred on the day of Queen Victoria's Coronation[1]: the town was illuminated that night, and as our house was in darkness James McHenry and Arthur Hamill remained outside to tell the cause, lest it should seem a want of loyalty. This I heard of in after years.

Shall I tell here my first recollections of yourself, dear Matthew? Our kitchen, and Mary Murray kneeling down beside you and getting your blessing with your hand on her head; and again, Mary staggering as if she were drunk and you toddling after her, crying your best. She used to do this, as it seems you had a special horror of seeing her in that state. You were only beginning to walk then.

All thought of going to France was then given up, and the next object was to find a small farm in the country which would give dear Father some little interest and pleasure to look after. While searching for such a spot, we went to Killowen for the summer, and the following winter was spent in Rostrevor. It is now that my first distinct recollections of dear Kate begin. She and I, being next in age, were always together both in plays and walks. One remembrance that stands clearest before me was a fault and its punishment in which we two had part. One day when the hour for our usual walk had come, it happened dear Mother was engaged with some visitors, so she trusted us with her keys to get our lunch—a slice of bread. We treated ourselves also to some cheese and returned the keys without telling what we had done, and very simply hid all in our Mother's own big

[1] 28 June, 1838.

muff and went to dress, intending to make a play when we went out. To our dismay, no lunch was there when we went for it; so the guilty pair went out with heavy hearts. Not a word was addressed to us that evening or next day, and we were miserable; the silence of Father and Mother was a terrible punishment. The third day, coming in from our walk, our gentle Father opened the door for us and said so sadly, "Children, go to your Mother". We were only too glad to go, and, throwing ourselves down before her, tell our guilt with tears of sincere contrition; and then all was over. Young as we were, Kate about eight years and I two years younger, we knew perfectly well that our fault was not what we took, but the betrayal of trust when honoured with the keys.

The "Night of the Big Wind," as the people used to call it—6 January, 1839—was one event of that year which, though it was passed by us in unbroken sleep, left its effects in the prostrate giant trees of the whole country round Rostrevor and in the dear spot, Seafield, which we took possession of early that year. Such lovely big trees lying on the lawn before the door and which long furnished us children with grand rides on their huge branches.

Seafield, in Killowen, about two miles and a half from Rostrevor, was the name of the farm we went to live in for the next seven years.[1] It was small, about sixteen acres, beautifully situated on the shores of Carlingford Lough, and immediately opposite that old historic town, whose old castle (King John's) was distinctly visible from our house, along with the ruins of the Dominican Abbey and the pretty village of Carlingford.

The house was old-fashioned and comfortable, but rather small; so a new wing was built soon after. The fields lay

[1] Many summers before these seven years began had seen our household transplanted for the summer months to the Killowen shore; and many summers after these seven years were over saw us returning to the beloved haunts. The affection of the excellent Catholic people of Killowen has endured for some sixty years; and therefore it was to Killowen that the first Catholic Chief Justice of England turned when he wanted a title to distinguish him from other Lord Russells.

SEAFIELD, KILLOWEN

sloping to the sea-shore and to the midday sun. That same sun was visible "from the rising to the going down thereof"· Behind us were the Slieve Ban and Croagh Shee Mountains, while before us lay the broadest part of the Carlingford Lough. Seven years of a peaceful, happy life were spent in that still loved, well-remembered old Home.

Our good governess, Miss Margaret O'Connor, daughter of an old respected friend whom I remembered in Ballybot as King Conor (who was the Conor McNessa, I suppose, of later acquaintanceship) came to live with us that summer, 1839, and then began very happy days of learning for us. As I recall them, I see we were well taught, not crammed, a pretty wide range of subjects. Besides the ordinary English (which we learned thoroughly), History (English, Roman and Grecian), French, Botany, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Music, Drawing. On starry nights Miss O'Connor would show us the constellations and planets, so that we learned them and loved to be star-gazing. The flowers, too, were pulled to exemplify what botany taught.

The future Author of "Idyls of Killowen" was Miss O'Connor's favourite pupil, a very amiable good child who was never in bad humour, and very early showed his love for poetry. When only between 8 and 9 years old, he composed his first poem entitled "The History of a Penny" in clear black capitals printed by himself.[1] The happy possessor of this large sum plans so many desirable ways of spending it and finally ends by giving it to some poor person which brings real pleasure to the self-denying owner. His next work was a poetical life of my dear Patroness, St. Frances of Rome.

The name of dear Arthur comes in here, so it is right I should go back a little and tell how our elder brothers and sisters were settled. First, the youngest, Mary Hamill, died before her mother's second marriage. James, the eldest, went out to South America. Thomas, who had assisted in the Brewery, died of fever in November, 1834. Arthur who had

[1] It may be stated on better authority that the penny's adventures were chronicled in prose.

wished to study for the Bar, gave up this design to be a help to our Father when God took Thomas. Anne entered very young the Convent of Poor Clares. Margaret married Peter McEvoy Gartlan of Dundalk, a rising, clever Attorney. When the Brewery was given up, dear Arthur was free to follow his own wishes; but again he yielded to the wishes of our Mother and relinquished the higher branch of the Law and became Peter Gartlan's apprentice as an Attorney.[1] Many things seemed to point to this as desirable. He lived with his sister and was within easy distance of home. And indeed that he valued home was proved by his coming to it almost every Saturday and passing the Sunday with us. He would walk from Dundalk across the mountains to Narrow-Water Ferry, cross it, and come on the whole way to Rostrevor when we lived there, and on to Seafield when we went to Killowen. A more loving, devoted son, or affectionate brother, there never lived, I do think. He was my godfather, and always so good and lovable as he was then and up to the last day of his life.[2] Many a pleasant climb up the mountains we had with dear Arthur in holiday times. We always had a book, poetry or story, which he would read aloud as we sat enjoying the glorious view from the top of Croagh Shee, where our vision took in the Isle of Man, Lambay Island, and the headlands to Dublin Bay. Even now I never hear Derry named but my memory brings a bivouac of this kind before me, because it was on such an occasion I listened to the siege of Derry in Banim's "Boyne Water," so spiritedly read by his grand voice, our governess and we five sitting on the sunny mountain top.

Miss O'Connor's authority was absolute, and we were taught to respect her as we would our parents. Lesson time was never interfered with, the parlour given up to us until nearly dinner. Some fine sunny days a knock might be

[1] He afterwards joined the Bar and attained the position of County Court Judge.

[2] I think it well to recall how he often said to his youngest brother, the priest of the family, "Remember the Dead!"—and how he would every year on All Souls' Day draw up careful lists of deceased relatives and friends for whom he wished to secure prayers.

heard at the door, and there, when opened, our dear Father might be seen standing, to request Miss O'Connor to allow us to go out to the meadows to pull the yellow flowers of the dandelion before their thistle-winged seeds were ready to fly away and produce a more plentiful crop, or to do some little bit of weeding in the garden. How delightedly we would start away, even though the half-holiday from books meant a real hard afternoon of tiring work!

A well-filled week of lessons was followed by the day of rest, Sunday. And how we did keep Sunday! Mother was most particular on that point. No cooking that might be done on Saturday was allowed. [Not that Sunday was condemned to a cold dinner—far from it!] If a pie ought to have paste, that must be made on Saturday. Each Sunday had Sunday's fare, and we four young people, that is Kate, myself, Charlie and you, sat at table with our seniors at every meal, dressed in our very neatest and best—each of us at breakfast with our egg, and a little print of butter of special dimension for our plates. After breakfast we got ready for Mass at 10 o'clock to which we drove in the same roomy inside car. Some of course walked. How shy I used to feel getting out of it, while the walls of the chapel yard were lined with men and boys waiting for the time of Mass. How solemn and holy everything was, while the calm that seemed to me to lie over the whole country was like the sensible presence of God. Many a time yet I recall these Sundays, and the words of Gerald Griffin,

> With heart at rest within my breast
> And sunshine on the land,

seem to describe my Sunday feelings.

After dinner each of us had to read a chapter of the Bible aloud.[1] Just think of our father and mother sitting listening respectfully, while some of us, not over good readers, got through our share. Strange, this seemed the right thing to

[1] We were often allowed to choose our chapters. Sarah's favourite was the sixteenth of St. John's Gospel which reports Our Lord's discourse at the Last Supper.

us and had not the effect of making us dislike the imposed task. It was part of the Lord's Day. The care and neatness required in and about the house in preparation for Sunday were in themselves useful lessons. The piano was never heard except it was to accompany a hymn, nor a game of cards allowed; but all sorts of childish games, such as riddles, conundrums, stories, etc., made our evenings pleasantly cheerful.

Each season had its pleasures. In Winter and early Spring the long evenings passed happily, learning lessons, working while some one read a story aloud, most frequently our dear gentle Father. How well I remember when some touching, high-minded, magnanimous action was related in the story, how his voice would falter and break, and he would be silent until he was able to command his feelings, always so sensitive and kindly. Kindly-hearted he truly was; no one ever heard his hard word. If any of us did wrong and Mother was showing her displeasure, he would take the culprit's part (if penitent) and the well-remembered words, "Margaret, let bygones be bygones," or "Forget and forgive," would get us pardon from her. One little lesson of his often served me since. I was standing at the parlour window, watching the rain pouring down the panes, and I said "Such a horrible day!" and dear Father, who overheard me, said, "Oh, child, don't say that. You don't know but some poor farmer has been praying for that rain, and God has sent it to him."

Our evenings were all spent together, so that we heard of the public events of the day from newspapers, which would occasionally be the reading, or we heard our seniors discuss them. In the stirring times of the Monster Meetings our grand Liberator was the figure ever before us. With what enthusiasm every word would be listened to! Ardent patriots and warm loyal Catholics as both Father and Mother were, and from our earliest days hearing these great subjects talked about, it would be unnatural if any of us could turn out anything but true warm-hearted Irish Catholics. When, now, I hear Charlie praised for being staunch to his country and

his faith, I think he would not be his father's and mother's son or worthy of them if he were anything else.

About this time it came to be my turn for accompanying our Mother on her journey to Dublin, and my whole ambition and real earnest prayer was to see O'Connell; and Mamma gratified me, brought me to Conciliation Hall, and twice in the streets we saw him, and the great man lifted his hat in acknowledgment of Mother's low respectful bow. What an ecstatic moment that was for me!

Our dear Mother had a sweet, touching voice, and Moore's "Irish Melodies" were her favourite songs; so we all learned early to love our great national poet. In our almost isolated home, having no social neighbours whatever and few visitors from a distance, the lives and actions of distinguished men of the day seemed to stand more prominently before us than they would otherwise have done. O'Connell, Moore, Wellington, and others of that day were well known to us. When the State Trials were going on, every line in the papers was listened to with intense interest by old and young. O'Connell's imprisonment was a subject for family mourning; while his liberation, 6 September, 1844, brought universal exultation.

Our good uncles and aunts kept dear Father always well supplied with newspapers besides some we got ourselves. The standard works of that time we got in the same way or from other kind friends. Scott, Banim, Miss Edgeworth, Dickens, Thackeray etc., etc., were familiar reading in our house. Greer's Lending Library in Newry had no steadier customers.

Our Summers brought us plenty of visitors: Margaret and her little ones, Mrs. Watson and her family, Mrs. Mulholland and hers, used to come to us for some weeks, so we had a full house. Such pleasant drives—Margaret's car as well as our own would be in requisition for some picnic or drive to places of interest, such as the Altar Rock where Mass was said in the Penal Days, or the Old Castle at Greencastle, etc. Other days excursions up the mountains or a sail over to Carlingford varied the scene. On wet days, all worked while a story was read aloud. Bathing of course was *the* occupation of every day that the tides suited. Besides the usual

routine we sometimes had the variety of visits to Newry or to a fair or to the races, and as all could not go at once, with most impartial justice, each child young or old went in turn; and these were events to look forward to, you may be sure. Also, when our mother went to Dublin, she brought one of us with her. Sometimes her stay was long, and at these times she brought Lily who would then get lessons in singing, riding, or dancing. Dear Lily did justice to all her teachers in all these accomplishments, as she had a lovely voice, and was a graceful rider and dancer.

I am writing as the things occur to me without respect to time or order, and now I will touch on what I may call our spiritual state. From the first year of our going to Killowen one or two of us were presented for either Confirmation or First Communion. I was confirmed in 1839, Charlie in 1841, and Kate made her First Communion the same year; and it was in the Old Chapel of Killowen they received those Sacraments, the only year the Bishop ever came there; 1842 was the year of my First Communion, and, I think, of your Confirmation. I do not remember when your First Communion was made.

We were rather piously inclined all of us, and we had a little association of our own and conferences on holy subjects. I remember the subject proposed in one of them by Kate was, "What was the best way to become a Saint?" And the unanimous opinion was "to do our daily duties as well as ever we could, and to do all in the presence of God to please Him" —a wise one surely, and containing as high spirituality as I, for my part, have ever learned since. We had to read each day the "Lives of the Saints" in Alban Butler, let them be long or short. It was no easy matter for four of us to read some of the long ones in the leisure we had from other duties, and I remember one day in particular when Charlie kept us such a time looking for him as he had our only book. About that time he had been told always to ask if he did not understand what he was reading. Being very obedient, and thus causing annoyance by constantly asking, he was next told to look out in the dictionary for the meanings of the words; so

this particular day, after a long search, we found him in the cart-house behind a cart tilted up, with the "Lives of the Saints" and his dictionary. So even then the future Chief Justice did not do things by halves. I suppose he forgets all about that now.

Little mortifications were also practised, such as not to drink when feeling thirsty, not to take the nicest potatoes, etc., etc. One Lent we four agreed we should only take milk once a day during it. This was not a small act, for it meant a breakfast of dry stirabout or a supper of dry bread. We could manage to do this, as we had our meals alone, the seniors keeping the fast till after 12 o'clock, when some of the young ones envied them what they called their tea-dinner, for they took their meal at noon and their collation in the evening. We were never discovered until the last week of Lent and to our great grief we had to break our resolution. Not, however, on the Black Fast days, for I never remember getting milk on those days and we were even permitted to fast till after 12 o'clock, when we joined Mother and Father at their meal.

In 1842 dear Uncle Charles[1] gave each of us a Roman Missal, and I may date from that my first realization of the awful adorable Sacrifice of the Mass.[2] Being now able to follow the Priest in the very words he used, the greatness of our privilege in not only assisting at those awful mysteries but in being even joined with him in the offering up of the Sacrifice (in our degree) came home more clearly to us. We used to leave the Chapel with the regretful feeling which might find expression in such words as "No more till next Sunday!" —and many a time it did.

Our happy home-life was to come to an end, for after the Autumn of 1844 we never *all* met in Seafield again. At this

[1] Dr. C. W. Russell of Maynooth.

[2] Long afterwards, when she had charge of the "Children of Mary" (a pious association of girls who meet at certain times at the Convent for special Devotions) she tried to give others the advantage she prized so much: she procured Missals for the senior girls and explained to them how to make use of them.

time our good parents, anxious to give us advantages we could not enjoy in the country, decided that all but yourself and our dear father should go to Belfast.

[The chronicler is here in error. Her correspondent is a better authority on this point, for he remembers his attendance at Mr. Harkins' school in Castle Street, Belfast, and very vividly he remembers one of his first days in Belfast when his patriotic mother sent him out with a Repeal cap on his head, a sort of Scotch cap with green shamrocks round it, and the magic word "Repeal". The little Repealer was mobbed by young urchins in the street. He returned with head uncovered, and used a different head-dress during the rest of his sojourn in the Northern Athens, as Belfast once called itself. Some months later the eldest boy was placed in Vicinage (Dr. Denvir's diocesan seminary, St. Malachy's College) and the two eldest girls at a private school in Belfast, while the youngest girl and boy returned to keep their parents company in Killowen, which now seemed lonely enough.

Before this Miss O'Connor had resigned her charge, and the parting had taken place with mutual regret. A very juvenile member of the family with whom she afterwards resided wrote to me lately when the news of Mother Emmanuel's death reached her Ursuline Convent: "Your sister was brave and generous with God, even in her childhood, and her reward must now be great. How I loved to hang on the kindly words of Miss O'Connor, as she in the gloaming of happy bygone days spoke of your charming home-circle! Each of them has lived the noble life that she foretold for her first and best-loved pupils". But the fulfilment of Margaret O'Connor's affectionate forecast takes us far beyond the point we have reached in the notes that we are transcribing.]

Our dear Father[1] was growing very delicate; he sank into

[1] Mother Emmanuel always felt somewhat aggrieved when the mother only, not the father, was spoken of in connexion with the great qualities which marked their eldest son, Lord Russell of Killowen. Arthur Russell was a man of ability and sterling character, able to play his part in the public affairs of his town till his health gave way. His signature as

a decline and faded away. Always sweet, patient, and holy, he never complained. The picture of him I have at this time is this: he is seated near the fire on a sofa with his prayer-book ever beside him on the table. I was his little attendant from the time I was able to do anything, cutting the tobacco for his long pipe, getting him anything he wanted, airing the wet newspaper, getting his stick when he was going out. In his sicknesses, for each Spring he suffered much from gout, I used to be allowed to sit watching by him and ready to call Mother when she was wanted. This honour I prized much. He was so very uncomplaining and patient. In the beginning of May we went up to Arthur's house in Hill Street, Newry, to be nearer the Doctors, and he never left his bed from that time. He got worse daily and received the Last Sacraments. One day dear Aunt Anne came down to see him, I was at my usual post sitting at the foot of the bed, but the curtains hiding me, so he did not know I was there. How my heart throbbed with pleasure, but a painful pleasure, when I heard him say to our Aunt, "I am not afraid leaving my children, for (thank God) they are all good". Often I have gone over those words since then—thankful to God that he could die content about us and that he had such a good opinion of us. Lily, Kate and Charlie were brought home from Belfast; and you, the little Master left by yourself in Killowen—all summoned to his deathbed.

At 3 o'clock a.m., 28 May, 1845, his agony began. We were all around his bed, and I had the honour of being behind him and holding him up in my arms, but, just before he died, Mother took my place. His last word was "Margaret," and at half-past eight he calmly breathed his last. May he rest in peace.

When the hearse was just moving from the door, poor dear Mother, who was looking her last at the coffin, suddenly threw up the window and with arms outstretched called on dear Father in an agony of grief. We three poor girls in the

chairman of the Newry Town Commissioners appears often in their Minute Book for 1831 (the year of Mother Emmanuel's birth) which I have lately had an opportunity of inspecting.

room were greatly frightened and put our arms round her to draw her in. It was so unlike her calm, silent sorrow to give this evidence of her broken heart. What a comfort and relief it was to see Mrs. Charles Jennings coming in to see us! Her presence and her kindly sympathy brought our dear Mother back to her usual patient resignation to God's will. Many a time I recall that timely charitable visit, and it has made me ever since desirous to visit a bereaved family, especially those left behind when the funeral has gone away.

CHAPTER III.

HER RECOLLECTIONS UP TO HER MOTHER'S DEATH.

Lonely and sad Seafield was to us all that summer, the dear father's loss felt daily more and more. It was the year when the potato blight first appeared, and the gloomy prognostications of famine were only too truly realized in the succeeding three years. With the blight over the potato fields everywhere, the land seemed withering away; and the misery, desolation, and death all over the country are matters of sad history. As regarded us, it was resolved that we should dispose of Seafield and take up house again in our old place in Newry. This we did in December, 1845. A new and very happy life began for us in dear old Newry. First, our earliest friends, Mrs. Charles Jennings' family, welcomed us and were very, very kind. That first Christmas, which otherwise would have been a lonely one in our half-settled house, was spent in her hospitable home, and I never forgot the picture of comfort, peace, and genial kindness her Christmas dinner-table presented. Such a handsome numerous family sat round it: father, mother, three sons and five daughters,[1] all bright, handsome faces, with us, the six guests, all in mourning garb and very mourning hearts, but well cheered with the cordial, affectionate attention lavished on us. I often recall that picture as that of the happiest family party as well as the handsomest I have ever seen; and most of them with God now, and *all* scattered. Similar happy social evenings came often, and were a new pleasure to us after our secluded life in Killowen.

It was not in social pleasures, however, that our happiness

[1] Besides two absentees—a Poor Clare and a police inspector.

lay, but in the riches of religious enjoyment that opened up to us: the morning Mass, the weekly Confession which we were soon allowed by our holy Confessors, and Holy Communion each week and oftener after a time. The Sunday filled with devotions—several Masses, Sermons, Benedictions, teaching catechism, and vespers—made that day truly the Lord's Day for us from beginning to end. And through the week the daily visit to our Lord in the always open church was a happiness not known before.

It is now that dear Kate comes in more prominently than she has done in my recollections up to this. She was at home the comfort and resource of every one in the house. Always cheerful and equal in temper, kind, self-forgetful, thoughtful for others, helpful and untiring in her round of house duties; all loved her and looked to her in their pains and pleasures, and she had a heart for all. She was a comfortable little housekeeper, a good mender of torn garments, and she got employment, especially at the stocking basket, as she was a good darner.

When at school, she learned drawing and excelled in horses —fiery, spirited animals. She was taught music, instrumental and vocal. She had an excellent memory, and being very fond of poetry, she could recite most of the finest pieces in Knowles's "Elocutionist" well and with great spirit. This was the only thing she continued to do, for the music, singing and drawing were all given up, as she thought she would never need them in after life; for she had made up her mind to be a Nun in an Order which served the poor only. She entered with all her heart into the religious advantages our new life presented, and joined to it earnest, self-sacrificing service of the poor. Those were the famine years, with the fever and cholera which followed. As our poor Mother was ever foremost in works of charity, there were Ladies' Societies for the clothing and relief of the poor starving people of Newry and its neighbourhood, of which she was President, while Kate was an untiring, zealous member. Clothes and food were daily given out at the Upper Vestry. Each lady had a certain number of articles of clothing given her to make or get made

weekly; so between sewing when at home, visiting the sick and poor in their houses, or calling from door to door of the better-off portion of the community for their weekly subscription, I can safely say Kate's whole time was devoted to the benefit of the poor.

The famine years are too well known in history to require any description. Indeed I would not attempt it, but surely they were years of such utter destitution, misery, starvation, and despair, that we may pray to God never to witness the like again. Business was nearly at an end in towns; no such things as fairs and weekly markets held. I remember, when these things were coming to an end, rejoicing when I saw a group of three or four men talking together in the street in Ballybot, which formerly used to be so thronged on fair-days that we could scarcely get through them. I remember one day seeing a woman, thin and haggard, with a little pale ghost of a child catching her thin skirt while she carried a burden under her arm. And what was it? The coffin with the remains of her little child which she was conveying to the graveyard of the Old Chapel to be buried. And this in Ireland, where our dead are honoured, and every neighbour feels the neighbour's death as if it were one of his own family. But now sickness was in every house and deaths were so frequent that this poor woman, who had recently buried her husband and one child (if not more), had not one friend to share her burden or relieve her of it for a moment. Kate had assisted that family well, and visited often the father who on his deathbed became a Catholic. It is pleasant to add that that poor woman saw brighter days, and that the little pale child became in after years a clever, zealous Sister of Mercy, valued and beloved by all who knew her. Thank God, she lives still, so I will say no more.

In 1848, Kate asked our Mother's permission to enter religion. Her inclinations led her to the Irish Sisters of Charity, but Mamma and our holy old Bishop, Dr. Blake, who had been the true, warm friend of our holy Foundress, Mother Macaulay, preferred she should be a Sister of Mercy. It was in the vacation time (I was at school then) which we spent

in Killowen that Kate first told me of her wish to leave home. Well I remember the heart-pang it cost me to hear we were to lose her, but I did not let her see it. That night I lay awake, crying quietly, while she slept on calmly. I tried to submit my will to the sovereign will of God, and at once I felt, as distinctly as if a voice spoke, the words rise before my mind: "Let there be no rapine in the holocaust"; and all pain and grief left me, and from that out I never let it be known what it cost me; for indeed I loved her very dearly.

She told me then of her great desire to be a Sister of Charity, and how it was God showed her what He intended her to be. Anxious to please our Mother and yet longing for the Order of Charity, she resolved to leave it entirely to the Bishop to whom she would manifest her heart. She went to see him in the sacristy after Mass; and, as she went round the Cathedral, she was praying God would show her His will and give her grace to do it entirely, yet longing and hoping his Lordship would allow her to be what she wanted. However, when Dr. Blake heard all, he said she ought to be a Sister of Mercy. From that moment all her disinclination vanished, and she became perfectly convinced God intended her for that Order, looking on the Bishop's voice as that of God Himself.

Dr. Blake made it a condition that she should return to Newry whenever he was able to found a Convent of Mercy here. So well was this understood that when six years later the Californian Mission was undertaken in Kinsale, the permission of Dr. Blake had to be got before Kate could be sent on it.

The next step was to choose a Convent, and, real Northern as she was, Kate much preferred being in the North. Derry was then the only Convent north of Dundalk; but as they had a pension school for young ladies, and as all Kate's sympathies were for the poor, she declined going there. Uncle Charles was of course consulted, having been left our guardian with Arthur, in our Father's will; and, his special friend Dr. Murphy, P.P. of Kinsale, having a few years pre-

viously brought the Sisters of Mercy there, Uncle recommended that Convent. Mamma visited it and was greatly attracted to dear Mother M. Francis Bridgeman and the Community, and delighted with the amount of good they were doing for the poor, in their fine, well-appointed literary and work schools. The sale of the produce of the latter from that time out was one of the many works of charity to which dear Mother devoted herself. She spared neither labour, time nor money if she could effect sales for this school; travelling everywhere where a friend or acquaintance lived, to tempt them to purchase the really good work, plain and ornamental, produced in Kinsale school.

Kate joined that Community in November, 1848. That same year saw more changes in our home circle. Dear Arthur who had lived with us since our return from Killowen was married in May to Mary Hamilton who was our opposite neighbour in Ballybot; and he took one of our houses, so that we were still almost one family.

Charles began his apprenticeship to him and Cornelius Denvir who were partners. You went to Castleknock, so that, when I left school in the following Spring, our house was very lonely to what it had been before I went to school. My last time of enjoying dear Kate's society had been during the vacation in Killowen, of which I have before spoken. You remember well our last climb up Slieve Ban Mountain with her. We rose about five o'clock, and we were standing beside the Big Stone when the six o'clock Angelus[1] was said by us three for the last time together at home.

Sadly I missed dear Kate on my return home. There was always something so restful, genial and bright about her, that no one in her company could keep dull or anxious long. She was thoroughly sensible, practical and energetic, and she never understood nursing sensibilities or humours; yet she

[1] The Rostrevor clock which warned us of the hour did not intend to pay this tribute to the Blessed Virgin and the great mystery of the Incarnation; it was placed in the tower of the Protestant church. But there is a far finer Catholic spire there now, and a far louder Catholic bell to announce the Angelus.

was forbearing, patient, and reasonable, so that you could always talk of your little difficulties with her when they would be sure to fade away of themselves. When tempted to regret and repine at our great loss in parting from her, the words that so strongly came before me when first I knew of it, "Let there be no rapine in the holocaust," always came up again and forcibly kept me from murmuring against God's appointment in our regard.

Each year found our Mother accompanied by some of us on a pilgrimage to Kinsale to visit dear Kate. The first year our dear friend, Father Patrick O'Neill (who was Kate's Confessor in Newry) went with Mamma and Lily to be present at the Reception. Dear Uncle Charles also was there. We all enjoyed our visits there, for Mother M. Francis and all the Sisters were very kind to us: so it was a grand way of passing the vacation time. In September, 1853, dear Elizabeth also entered; so then you and I were our dear Mother's companions. At the time of Kate's Profession dear Mary Hamill came with us; Uncle Charles was also there, and her Profession was received by Dr. Daniel Murphy, who at that time was the Bishop of Hyderabad, now Archbishop of Hobart in Tasmania, one of the oldest Bishops in the world, and who was staying with Dr. Murphy, P.P., his brother.

Meantime dear Father O'Neill was aiding Dr. Blake in his desire to have the Sisters of Mercy from Kinsale. Before Elizabeth got leave to go there, the same condition was made by the Bishop that she should return to Newry with her dower (as in Kate's case also) if his Lordship could succeed in having the Convent established. Dear Mamma made a very generous proposal which was not publicly known, of giving over the whole of the Ballybot property for the Convent. However, at that time, it was thought that the site lay low and might not be healthy, and it was declined. Often, since I have seen what a populous neighbourhood that is, it seems to me to have been a great mistake. But God allows everything, we know, for some wise end.

In 1854, at the time of our annual visit to Kinsale, Father

Gallagher came from San Francisco, asking for a foundation there, and Kate was among those who offered themselves; indeed I believe nearly all the Community did so. As I mentioned before, Dr. Blake's leave had to be asked, and on receiving it she was numbered among the future Community. We were there when the Chapter met to vote for the foundation and for the Mother Superior of it. Mother M. Francis told us that, when the name of Sister Mary Baptist was announced as the chosen one, poor Kate was entirely unprepared for it—she started, then bowed down her head for a moment, and, when Mother M. Francis saw her face, there was not a trace of emotion or excitement, but only its usually calm, sweet expression. So accustomed was she to regard the will of a superior as that of God in her regard, that she never dreamed of remonstrating, but simply bent her will to God's, no matter what effort it cost her. This is what Mother M. Francis said of her.

As Father Gallagher had to return to San Francisco in a few weeks, preparations were hurried on, and we were in Kinsale seeing all going on. During all that time Kate was as calm and collected as if leaving her Convent home were a matter of everyday occurrence. Once only did her great self-control break down, and that was one day when Mamma and Sister Mary Aquin, Sister Mary Baptist and myself were busy drawing out a quantity of tangled silk, I took out one of your pieces of poetry which you had written to me some time before and began to read it for them—"Retrospection". You wrote it from Maynooth, and in it you recall the old place in Killowen and the family there, and since then the way all are scattered and that I remain alone. It begins:—

> In the dim uncertain twilight the fading evening brings
> I sit in my lonely chamber and think of many things.

While reading, I saw Kate's head droop a little and tears steal down her face; then just for a moment she bent her face on her hands on the table, and when she raised it again her face, though wet with tears, wore its usual calm, sweet expression. None of us noticed her emotion and the work we were at

went on without a word about it. I don't wonder that that little poem overcame even Kate's equanimity, for it is certainly very touching.[1]

We were in Dublin when the party of Nuns for the Mission, accompanied by Rev. Mother Mary Francis and Sister Mary Aquin, came up to Baggot Street, Dublin. The same peace and calm continued till our last farewell. They sailed from Liverpool, 8 September, Our Lady's Nativity, and landed in San Francisco, 8 December, 1854, the Feast of Her Immaculate Conception, the very day when Pope Pius IX and the assembled Bishops in Rome defined that dogma. Our Blessed Lady plainly had them in her safe and holy keeping.

You know as much about dear Kate from that time out as I do. Her letters were always welcomed and had to go the rounds of friends and Convents. They were remarkable for a total absence of self, and were always filled with most interesting and edifying details of duties or anecdotes of the sick, or conversions of sinners in the hospital, etc., etc., as those letters that have been preserved show.

Dear Mother never forgot her absent and much-loved child; and, as postulants were needed for that mission, I know of more than one whom she assisted largely to go to her. As to myself, I always intended, when our Mother could spare me, to go to San Francisco, and even when she *did* allow me, through the persuasion of Rev. Mother M. Catherine O'Connor and Sister M. Aquin, to enter here, in Newry, it was with the intention of going out to Kate when an opportunity offered. In those days such opportunities did not often occur, and as my time of Profession drew near and no chance of getting out seemed likely, I had to content myself and remain where I was, though the wish was ever present in my mind, not so much for the affection I ever felt for dear Kate, but more because there was no one for whom I ever felt the same reverence and dependence. Our Mother about this time, 1860, was arranging her worldly affairs; and, though each of us had got our full dower and all other

[1] Most of these verses are quoted later.

expenses paid in full, there was some money she had still left to divide. When Kate's wishes were consulted, she told Mother that, as the Sisters were then getting up their new Hospital, she would wish the sum of money (£270, as well as I remember) coming to her to be laid out in material, appliances, etc., which were difficult to be got at that time in San Francisco.

This duty dear Mother undertook with her accustomed zeal and energy, and in order to lay out the money to the best advantage she spared no fatigue or expense. As the list of things necessary for the equipment of an Hospital included feather beds, pillows, mattresses, sheeting, delf, glass, silver, blankets, flannels, my Mother went to the towns in England where these various articles were manufactured. She was so clever and so accustomed to business that she got all this immense work completed and packed in enormous bales and crates and finally shipped at the beginning of 1861, and all went safely.

But it cost dear Mother too much. Just after this great work was over she was seized with apoplexy and became unconscious in Arthur's house in Eccles Street, Dublin. She was some days in this state and believed to be dying, but thank God she recovered and lived for six years. However, she was never the same again, as she was partially paralysed, so that she was an invalid all those years. Her great patience, self-forgetfulness, and self-control never forsook her. Never a complaint from her, but always so easily pleased and ready to enjoy a visit from the Sisters, or a story read to her by her attendant. When we remember the marvellously clever and active business woman she was, it is wonderful to contemplate the complete change—helpless, dependent on others for everything. One must own it was the grace God 'gave her in reward for her zeal for His glory and for the benefit of His poor that merited the peaceful happy ending of her days. Even the sacrifices she had made in giving up to religion so many of her children God rewarded by a death-bed surrounded by nuns who loved and revered her, and among them two of her own daughters, though that

death took place at the early hour of 3.30 a.m., 29 August,[1] 1867, in her seventy-sixth year. May her dear soul rest in peace. Amen. I will end here, especially since you so much wish to see these recollections now. But, as I warned you at first, you will be disappointed, so seldom does Kate appear in these hurried and scanty "Recollections".

This was the last of Mother Emmanuel's notes. As they end with her mother's death, they may be carried a step farther, to the grave near the Old Chapel, as the people affectionately call the second parish church of Newry. On the cross over Mrs. Russell is engraved this inscription.

"*Sacred to the memory of Arthur Russell who died* 28 *May*, 1845, *aged* 59 *years; and of Margaret Russell his wife, died* 29 *August*, 1867, *aged* 75 *years. Beloved and revered by all who knew them.*

"*Here also is interred their dear child Mary who died* 28 *June*, 1838, *aged* 13 *years. Of your exceeding charity pray for the eternal repose of their souls and the souls of all their friends and kindred. R.I.P.*"

The mother of our present beloved Pope was Margaret Sarto, and the inscription he put upon her tomb would suit her Irish namesake exactly. "An exemplary woman, a virtuous wife, an incomparable mother. An edifying death crowned a whole life of labour and sacrifice."

[1] August was also the month in which died her eldest son and the two eldest of the daughters who lived to womanhood. For her youngest daughter the last message came in March. For her youngest son what year and month and day?

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY IMPRESSIONS OF SOME FRIENDS.

The simple document enshrined in the two foregoing chapters has told us little about the writer of it herself directly; but, as I remarked in introducing it, it reveals a good deal about her indirectly and implicitly. Now, however, we have to cite a witness whose testimony will be very direct and explicit. As she mentions only the eldest and the youngest of the three sisters, we are reminded that the second sister, known to us now as Mother Mary Baptist, had already at this date disappeared for ever from the little family circle. The eldest was then about to follow her sister to the Kinsale Convent of Mercy in the September of 1853. During that summer we were joined at our seaside home in Killowen by a very youthful visitor from Belfast, a little maiden, shy as a startled fawn when strangers were present, but full of mirth among friends, and already deft at the weaving of playful rhymes. She was destined in after years to make the name of Rosa Mulholland and afterwards that of Lady Gilbert known and loved as the author of many exquisite stories and romances like "Marcella Grace," "The Wild Birds of Killeevy," "Father Tim," and many another beautiful book. I have begged Lady Gilbert to jot down her impressions of the subject of this sketch.

. . . . . .

"I see her before me, her neat, small, gracefully rounded figure clothed in some grey-blue material, with a white crimped frill at the throat and wrists. But she looked sweet in everything. I think I see her putting her hand before her eyes and laughing at us through her fingers, half-amused, and half-ashamed of us for saying that!

"She had large, serious, grey eyes, to which the rather drooping lids gave a dove-like expression. Her mouth was eloquent of charity, even in silence. She had softly moulded cheeks, coloured like a fresh rose. Her forehead was broad, and she wore her sunny golden-brown hair braided in Madonna bands, as smooth as its natural waves and ripples would allow. Her voice was very low and persuasive in conversation, very sweet and musical in laughter; her singing was the warbling of a bird. She had a very joyous smile, and her mirth was as ready as a child's to respond to any little bit of fun or frolic.

"In the cottage at Killowen Point,[1] where I remember her first, she was the housekeeper, and looked after the comfort of every one. I see her carrying in hot cakes for tea, filling the cups, or cutting bread and butter. I remember her pleading with her mother for leave to wear her best bonnet on an occasion that seemed important enough to require it, gently but most firmly representing her case. I forget how the matter ended. I was lost in wonder at your mother for exacting so much childlike obedience from so grown-up and so perfect a daughter.

"How Sarah enjoyed the climbs up the mountain, and the excursions to the fruit gardens on the road to Rostrevor where we went to eat fruit off the trees and bushes, and to carry some home for our further delectation! I think she and Lily walked to Rostrevor to Mass in the mornings, two miles. Their intense piety struck me with awe; I had not seen anything exactly like it before. I confess that at eleven years old my piety was fitful. Sometimes religious impressions were painfully urgent, or surprisingly rapturous, at other times almost blotted out by more living dreams of poetry and art, and natural affection.

"Three or four years later Sarah came to Belfast. I had seen care and sorrow, and grown old in the meantime. Sarah was longing then to enter her Convent and begin her

[1] A village lining a little bay that is sheltered by a high bank of sand running far out into Carlingford Lough, nearer to Rostrevor than the Seafield of our childhood.

life's work of charity, but she remained with her mother at her mother's desire, and occupied herself in learning everything which she thought might prove useful to her afterwards in the Convent. She was there as sweet and bright in looks, as gentle and genial in her sympathies, as simple and dainty in her dress, as persistent in her serious holy ways as ever. Though so wise and womanly, she lived in obedience to her mother. I remember her pleading for a pair of new gloves. I wondered she could care, seeing the life she was looking forward to: so little did I know about nuns. She did care, with the care of a nun, for delicate purity of attire. At that time I imagined the life in a Convent to be merely one of penitential and melancholy exercises and rules.

"When she spent an evening with us, or when we went to her, she was always kind and merry. I remember well her singing of the melodies, 'No, not more welcome,' 'How dear to me the hour,' and that song (who wrote it?[1]):—

> The noontide blaze o'er the desert fell
> When the traveller reached the wished-for well;
> But vain was the hope that had lured him on,
> His trust in the desert, the water was gone.

I never heard it sung except by her, and I could scarcely imagine any one else singing it, so completely is it associated with her. When I think of the words, I hear her voice. When singing, she would drop her lace work in her lap, and pour out her song without any accompaniment, a soft rapt look on her uplifted face which I can see as if it were now.

"At Killowen she used to sing second to Lily's soprano. How delightfully their voices harmonised in 'Bendemeer's Stream,' 'The Watchman,' 'I saw from the Beach'. These duets remain as music distinct in my memory like the sound of the breeze in Rostrevor Wood, or the breaking of the waves on the shore at Killowen Point.

"I remember one Sunday morning being in their house in Donegall Street—I don't know how I came to be there—when Charles wanted Sarah to sew a missing button on his shirt,

[1] Mrs. Hemans.

which she firmly refused to do. I suppose she thought he could easily manage to meet the difficulty in another way. I wondered how she could refuse to sew the button on. It did not seem to me to be a servile work, but Sarah was strict in her notions.

"She seemed to me always a combination of sweetness, gentleness, immovable firmness, unwavering conviction even on the smallest points, perfect holiness, undisturbable peacefulness, and flawless charity. Even in her early days, before she had properly entered on her saintly career, she was fit company for the angels. What must she be now when she has taken her place among them?"

. . . . . .

About the period to which these recollections of Lady Gilbert go back, Rosa Mulholland (as she was then—a timid, blushing little girl) made her friend the subject of some verses, of which I recollect just one phrase, which she has almost repeated in the last of the foregoing sentences.

I sometimes shut my eyes and think
'Tis an angel that I hear.

"Her mouth was eloquent of charity, even in silence." This might remind one of Mrs. Browning's "My Kate":—

Such a blue inner light from her eyelids outbroke
You looked at her silence and fancied she spoke—
When she did, so peculiar yet soft was the tone
Though the loudest spoke also, you heard her alone.

And a great deal more of that beautiful poem could be applied to Mother Emmanuel, especially the line:—

'Twas her thinking of others made you think of her.

But Mother Emmanuel was herself the theme of song. One of her notes has mentioned that almost the first effort of the Muse that is responsible for "Vespers and Compline," "Idyls of Killowen," "Altar Flowers," "All Day Long," and "A Soggarth's Last Verses," was a versification of Alban Butler's account of her patron saint, Frances of Rome. Many years later, a Maynooth student, indulging

In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind,

sought a cure for his very mild fit of melancholy in thinking of the sister who was then the only one remaining with their mother. Of the verses collected under the title of "Idyls of Killowen" these are the very youngest.

Will you sit down beside me, sister,
And sing me some dear old rhyme?
It does my heart good to hear you
As I've heard you, ah! many's the time.
It does my heart good to hear you,
And I'm lonely and sad to-day:
So come and sit down beside me
And sing all my sadness away.

And your little hand soft and tender,
Give it me here to hold.
I like to have you so near me,
For I'm very lonely and cold,
And over my heart there's a chillness—
I'm sad, sister dear, to-day:
So come and sit down beside me
And sing all my sadness away.

There is something about you, sister,
A holy, unselfish *feel*,
That can quiet the spirit's yearnings,
And, like grace, o'er the worn heart steal.
You wield a bright gentle power
That the heart dares not gainsay;
So come and sit down beside me
And sing all my sadness away.

The last of these stanzas is unwittingly translated into prose in Mother Emmanuel's copy book and applied to Mother Baptist; but it suits herself just as well. "Sadly I missed dear Kate on my return home. There was always something so restful, genial, and bright about her, that no one in her company could keep dull or anxious long. She was thoroughly sensible, practical and energetic, and she never understood nursing sensibilities or humours; yet she was forbearing, patient, and reasonable, so that you would always talk of your little difficulties with her, when they would be sure to fade away of themselves."

This again is very like what has been said of Mother Emmanuel since her death. "I miss her very much [wrote E. G.]

She was one you could talk to better than any person I ever knew." And one of her spiritual children wrote: "There was a something charming about Mother Emmanuel which attracted all kinds of people. Her gentleness, and brightness, her great loving-kindness and sympathy, together with her conversational powers, made it a delightful privilege to be in her society. But who can tell what she was to her Community whom she trained in the service and love of God not only by her instruction and vigilance but by her beautiful example? To meet her after her daily meditation was like meeting an angel—the eyes beaming with happiness and holiness and the smile unusually bright: she seemed like one strengthened to do anything for God. Her love for the Most Blessed Sacrament was intense, and all her efforts to beautify our Lord's Eucharistic Home seemed nothing. Her power of imparting comfort to others was no less wonderful. No one ever left her without feeling consoled and strengthened to bear on with joy and patience. I once heard a very holy Mother Superior say she would trust the direction of her soul to Mother Emmanuel with as much confidence as to the late Dr. Leahy." Those who know the estimation in which this saintly Bishop of Dromore was held can appreciate the force of this last testimony.

But it is a gross anachronism to cite this last testimony so early; for it speaks of Sarah Russell as not only a Religious but as guiding her Community; whereas we have only reached the time when, her two sisters having become Sisters of Mercy, she was left alone with her mother. This was, I am convinced, an exceedingly meritorious period of her life—these years of waiting when she felt herself so mature, so eager to be about her Father's business, and yet unable to embrace the state to which she was clearly called. For when I once, talking with her long afterwards, implied that she had in this matter been influenced by the example of her sisters, she assured me that her mind had been made up on that point from very early years, and she had resolved to be a Nun long before Kate's Hegira from Killowen to Kinsale. Her seniors, however, having forestalled her, it was plainly her

duty to wait for the present with the good mother who had already sacrificed so much and so ungrudgingly. The elder of her two brothers was now going through his legal training in Belfast, and the younger through his ecclesiastical training in Maynooth. The latter, probably from that fellow-feeling which makes us wondrous kind, realized the loneliness that his sister felt in the old home under such altered conditions and sent her some sympathetic verses which have survived for half a century. After describing the familiar old homestead with loving minuteness, its lively population comes up before the poet's memory :—

'Twas indeed a pleasant homestead
And noisy as a hive,
And a father and mother dwelt there,
And merry children five.
In that quiet happy household
The days went merrily by—
Five innocent-hearted children,
And the youngest of them I.
But ah, those times are over,
Far, far back in the past.—

For two or three years seemed a longer interval then than ten or twenty years seem now. Mrs. Alice Meynell has an ingenious paper, showing that only the childish mind is capable of a real sense of antiquity. This youth, still in his teens, had two or three years before apostrophized

My childhood's days ! my childhood's days !
When I was young in earth's rude ways ;
Even now my memory fondly strays
Amid your scenes, my childhood's days !

Childhood seemed already even then to lie very far back in the past ; and now the grave Maynooth student, who " sits in his lonely chamber and thinks of many things," goes on to inquire what has become of the inhabitants of that " roomy, old-fashioned mansion in a quiet country-place " :—

How fareth now that household ?—
Who dead, and who alive ?—
And where are the father and mother,
And where the children five ?

Ah! first the kind, dear father
Was called to our Father's breast:
He was the first to leave us—
God grant his pure soul rest!
Then sought we another dwelling
And left that country-place:—
Our new life's peaceful current
'Twere bootless now to trace.
But where are the pleasant faces
That lighted that quiet hearth?
Ah! where are the cheerful voices
That sang for very mirth?
Two of them (souls so earnest)
The clayey cords have riven
That bound them to earthly homestead—
No home for them but Heaven!
And one brave soul hath entered
On the rude battle-field,
Where the true heart still conquers
That can a stout arm wield.
In the fight may the good God guard him
And bear him safely through!
Go forth, 'tis the hour of battle—
Stern work hast thou to do.

I interrupt the youthful poet at this point to emphasize the prophecy implied in these lines. The readers of an earlier page in this sketch have had Mother Emmanuel's account of the effect of these simple lines on Mother Baptist when she heard them read at Kinsale in the summer of 1854 during her last preparations for her journey to San Francisco. Therefore these lines date back to the early months of 1854 at least, four or five years before Charles Russell began his remarkable career at the English Bar. The poet was here indeed a *vates;* but with all his faith in his brother's ability he little dreamt that he was addressing this apostrophe to the future Lord Chief Justice of England.

All these have fled our old hearthstone;
I too am sitting here—
And *thou* art left, sweet sister,
Alone with our mother dear.

It must at times be dreary,
Alone where there used to be
Such a merry-hearted circle
With the merriest of them thee.
Thy meek firm will keeps under
All restless thoughts, I know;
Yet must thy heart ring sadly
With echoes of long ago.
But no, I fear not for thee,
For I know thy nature well,
And, whithersoe'er thou goest,
An angel there shall dwell.
Thou couldst make of Lapland winter
A springtime warm and bland—
Ah, no! I fear not for thee,
Thou shalt reach the Better Land.
But as thou journeyest onward
To the sure and happy goal,
Pray for a poor fond brother
With a better heart than soul.

Perhaps one of God's merciful designs in permitting the delay in the realization of the pious maiden's longings for the religious state was that she might meanwhile exercise a hallowing influence over her brother's summer holidays—that she might continue to be a little longer the last of—

Those fair angels, saintly, wise, light-hearted,
Whose smile made pure the very air I breathed,
And who at parting (for we all have parted)
Sweet, sanctifying memories bequeathed.[1]

. . . . . .

At this point this chapter was laid aside as finished, and freighted certainly with a quite large enough cargo of rhyme. But another earlier and still more personal tribute has since then come under my eyes which looked upon it last more than half a century ago. Lady Russell of Killowen sent me lately a little leather bag which had been found among the papers at Tadworth Court. It contained some old letters, old receipts, and other scraps that Sister Mary Emmanuel's mother had stored up in it; and after her death in 1867, it was sent with her other belongings to her eldest son who

[1] "Vespers and Compline," p. 4.

probably never examined it. Among the relics which only a mother's love would take the trouble to preserve were some boyish verses addressed by the writer of the present sketch to the subject of it. As they have survived so long and have presented themselves so opportunely, it seems right to place them here. The printer will set them up, without the slightest alteration from the original manuscript, which is itself an imitation of printing in italics.

The thought oft steals on me, how lonely and drear,
How cheerless and comfortless, Earth would appear,
If I had not my Sarah, my kind-hearted Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

Oh! sure she's a treasure worth gold upon gold—
A heaven-sent blessing, of sweetness untold,
My fond, loving Sarah, my fondly loved Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

God alone knows the heart, and yet I'm near sure,
That no Angel-heart is more stainless or pure
Than yours, my own Sarah, my meek, holy Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

Her face, mild and modest, heart-lighted and gay,
Is so bright and so cheerful, 'twould force you to say,
That pretty is Sarah, my sweet little Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

The soft sunny smile, on her mild features seen,
Would light up the heart that in sadness had been;
Sweet smile of my Sarah, my light-hearted Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

Oh! hers is a spirit to cheer through the strife—
To soothe and to guide us in toiling through life:
For wise is my Sarah, strong of heart is my Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

And yet, though to praise her my words are but weak,
She knows not her goodness, she's lowly and meek;
So humble is Sarah, my gentle-souled Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

Oh! I'd live on in wretchedness all my life long,
Ere she'd taste of sorrow, ere she'd meet with wrong,
For I love my own Sarah, my sweet, darling Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

Then, whate'er be my lot in this sojourn of care,
Still, still will I pour forth this heart-breathèd prayer:
May God bless thee, Sarah, and watch o'er thee, Sarah,
My own Sister dear!

This piece is dated "November 23, 1850," when the writer was 16 years old. I wonder greatly that I dared to speak out so plainly, for gush and sentimentality were not at all encouraged among us; and I think that only very exceptional qualities in a sister could inspire such a lyric to a very unromantic boy at that age.

Thickly strewn with verse as this chapter has been, I will end it with a few lines not written about her who is the theme of all the other verses, but realized in her very perfectly.

If Faith were given human form,
Alive and warm,
I think thy steady-burning eyes,
Where Love and Hope and Courage dwell,
I think thy mouth, so sweet and wise,
Would suit her well;
For if not very Faith thou art,
Yet Faith abiding in thy heart
Hath wrought thy features to her will
And made them pure, and glad, and still.[1]

[1] "New Poems," by Ronald Campbell Macfie.

CHAPTER V.

HER SAINTS AND HER DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

To his youngest sister remaining in the world, not to her cloistered seniors, the Maynooth student turned for counsel when trying to ascertain God's will with regard to his own special vocation. Of one of her letters on the subject I have preserved a single leaf, each page of which is written over and crossed in the beautiful handwriting that she had just acquired. I showed it at the time to my confessor, Dr. Whitehead, the Vice-President of the College, and I remember that he said I should thank God for having so wise a sister to consult. He seems to be referred to in the first words that have survived :—

"As your friend and a man of the world, he will be able to see clearer than you how you may steer carefully through the difficulties and hindrances before you in the world's point of view. You seem surprised that, with all your high aspirings after a more perfect state, your present fervour does not keep pace with them ; but I am not. A contented, peaceful mind settled in Christ, as St. Agatha says, is needful before one can pray *well*, that is, for one's own comfort, but, thank God, prayer is not sensible devotion, or I would seldom pray. Is not prayer laying before our loving compassionate Father all our wants and miseries, begging to be relieved from them or strengthened to bear them and have patience with ourselves ? And is not your sincere seeking out the state of life in which you can love Him best and please Him most, a constant, acceptable prayer before Him ? Do, dear brother, at once consult your confessor. I suppose him to be both prudent and pious. On his decision act; lay all on his conscience; let

the responsibility of directing your course be on him, and, child-like, trust to ——"

The letter was continued across the first two pages which have perished. It ended thus: "I have written all this so quickly that I have not had time to think of the regular preaching it is. You'll forgive me, won't you? May God direct you, my own dear brother. Of course I pray for you: let this be mutual."

As I have said, only half of this letter has survived. Even of this part I have purposely held back this sentence: "I share your admiration of the glorious St. Ignatius and St. Aloysius, but I feel even more for St. John Francis Regis. He was a great son of St. Ignatius." The following year, writing from the Jesuit novitiate at Beaumont Lodge, Windsor, I asked her to tell me the grounds of her predilection for St. John Francis Regis; and she replied in a letter, of which again I preserved only a fragment:—

"— to bestow on you all the graces you need to fit you for His eternal enjoyment. But first you must strive to earn it by adding to His glory here, like that great loving Saint, John Francis Regis. Surely, surely I do love that Saint. Have you studied his life? He seems to me to unite in his character each particular virtue that distinguished your other Saints. Ignatius' zeal for the conversion of sinners and infidel nations burned in his heart, too. Aloysius' innocence and application to study have their counterpart in that period of Regis' life, and he has, above all, his seraphic love of the Blessed Sacrament. In what life will you find such instances of humility and annihilation of self-love; such untiring zeal where God's glory could anyhow be increased; charity for his neighbour, that hardships as great as any endured by Xavier and the Missionary Saints could not chill; such gentleness and meekness and lovableness in his disposition; and, all through, the sustaining, absorbing love of our dear Lord on the altar, which made him far more angel than man. I love St. Aloysius and the young Saints, who in a short space have fulfilled a long time, and who have been called early to receive their reward. But I love more the strong, brave

Saints who have endured life's trials and temptations, and been permitted to do something great to increase God's love and glory on earth, like my own glorious patron, St. Thomas Aquinas, and your St. John Francis Regis. I know it is not right to compare Saint with Saint; but I have always inclined to those who have 'borne the burden of the day and the heats'. But, by the way, what made you mention St. John Francis Regis?"

She speaks here of St. Thomas Aquinas as her patron. Her choice fell on him partly because she was born on the morrow of his feast-day, but more because, in studying his life in Alban Butler, she found him to be the Laureate of the Eucharist, the author of the "Pange Lingua," of the "Lauda Sion," of the "Adoro te devote". She would have placed her religious life under the consecration of his name if her eldest sister had not chosen it before her—almost stolen it from her, as I expressed it to St. Thomas Aquinas himself:—[1]

> By one dear sister hath thy name been stolen
> To mark her as the Bridegroom's happy bride.
> Another, born upon thy feast, or near it,
> Hath from the cradle glowed with love divine
> For thee and for thy Eucharistic Spirit,
> Whereof, through her, a spark hath kindled mine.

When she entered the same Convent-home as this sister, she was obliged to choose some other religious name. I remember her in a letter to Beaumont Lodge, Old Windsor (soon after changed from a novitiate into a boarding-school) successfully defying me to discover the name of her choice, although mentioned (she said) in both the Old and the New Testament. In being the first Irish Nun to choose the name *Emmanuel*,[2] she gave it an explicitly eucharistic meaning,

[1] "Vespers and Compline," p. 112.

[2] About the same time Father Lacordaire from his beautiful college of Sorèze wrote to a friend on 9 March, 1858, the morrow of Mother Emmanuel's birthday:—

"The young man of my 'Lettres sur la Vie Chrétienne' will be called Emmanuel; it is a scriptural name, and seems to me a fitting one. Moreover it is the name of a young man who has just left Sorèze, to

out of her love for the Sacrament of Love, in which our Redeemer best earns the title "God with us"; and her feast was accordingly kept on the Tuesday within the Octave of Corpus Christi. Everything connected with the Blessed Sacrament had been always the object of her absorbing devotion. To a much earlier period of her life belongs a little incident which has been commemorated in prose and rhyme. *She* was that "Little Devotee of the Blessed Sacrament" of whom there is question in "At Home near the Altar" (p. 32); and the story will be told again in one of the closing pages of this book about Emmanuel Chapel.

More than once in these notes reference will be made to Mother Emmanuel's extraordinary devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. This was her special attraction from her earliest years. In one of her own notes which has been given already she describes thus the increase of spiritual consolations caused by the change of their home from country to town, from Killowen to Newry. "It was not in social pleasures, however, that our happiness lay, but in the riches of religious enjoyment that opened to us: the morning Mass, the weekly Confession which we were soon allowed by our holy confessor, and Holy Communion each week and oftener after a time. The Sunday filled with devotions—several Masses, sermons, Benedictions, teaching catechism, and Vespers—made that day truly the Lord's day for us from beginning to end. And through the week the daily visit to our Lord in the always open church was a happiness not known before." This deep Eucharistic spirit entered into her religious vocation; for no doubt she would have eagerly adopted the words

whom I was attached for his piety and good disposition". My interest in this name made me notice a passage in the "Life of Shirley Brooks," the second Editor of "Punch". His father had a curious fad for addressing letters to the newspapers and to persons in exalted station. Fortunately he generally submitted them to the judgment of his son who as often as possible suppressed them. On 20 June, 1865, he writes in his Diary: "Letter from the governor to the Queen, begging and praying that the new Prince may not be called 'Emmanuel,' as it is wicked. But I do not think it will influence her, for several reasons, one being that I will not send it."

of Mother Mary of Jesus, foundress of the Convent of Tolosa, who is quoted by St. Alphonsus as saying that for two reasons she cherished a high esteem for her vocation: first, because a Religious enjoys the society of Jesus Christ who in the holy sacrament dwells with her in the same habitation; and, secondly, because a Religious, having by the vow of obedience sacrificed her own will and her whole being to God, belongs unreservedly to Him. And, whatever they may have meant when they were first written, Mother Emmanuel would certainly have given this sacramental meaning to the words of King David: "One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; that I may see the delight of the Lord, and may visit His temple".

"The delight of the Lord," *Voluptas Domini*, His pleasure, His luxury. What this is God Himself tells us: "My delight is to be with the children of men". *Deliciæ meæ esse cum filiis hominum.* To be with us, to be really our Emmanuel, "God with us". What utterly incomprehensible condescension on the part of the infinite and eternal and omnipotent Creator and Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth to feel thus towards His poor human creatures and to express the feeling so tenderly, so constantly! But what are feelings and the expression of feelings, what are words to deeds? In the Blessed Eucharist and in all the eucharistic relations of God to man, this mysterious craving of the Heart of God for union with the heart of man is realized and gratified.

A truly eucharistic life like Mother Emmanuel's, such as those who were near her know it to have been—know it in spite of her humility, self-control, and self-effacement—is an answer to the cry of surprise that sometimes springs from the heart, wondering how the Most High can stoop to such lowliness and abjection. Without the Blessed Eucharist, Jesus would not have won the peculiar love that He wanted from us. Hearts also *ponderantur, non numerantur;* they are not reckoned by number only but according to their beauty and worth. The arithmetic of heaven's chancery is different from that of our counting-houses. If only a small number

seem to correspond generously with the designs of God's love, even one of them, one such soul as we are thinking of, may be full compensation to God for thousands who reject the overtures of His tenderest compassion. *Cor Jesu, amas, non amaris, utinam ameris !*

This very tender devotion to the mystery of love, of which Sister Mary Emmanuel wished her religious name to be a constant reminder, betrays itself in sundry little incidents at different periods of her life. She told me long afterwards that, when she attended Miss Quigley's school in one of the houses opposite the Cathedral, she could not bear to sit with her back to the window, but always tried to turn her face towards the sacred building across the street. She let out at the same time another little trait of her conduct in those schoolgirl days. There was a teacher of arithmetic at the school who was poorly clad and no doubt poorly paid. Some of the girls were so thoughtless and inconsiderate as to annoy the poor man. S. F. R. could not stand this and took special care to show him due respect. Even as late as July, 1901, she recalled the matter, and how in gratitude the good man would take special pains in correcting her exercises in arithmetic.

The only souvenir that she preserved of a visit to London in the spring of 1858—on the way to Beaumont Lodge, between Royal Windsor and historic Runnymede, where there was an Irish Jesuit novice in whom she was interested—her only memento of the great metropolis was the certificate of her admission to the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, established in the Church of Our Lady and St. Joseph, Kingsland, from which the Fathers of Charity twenty years later removed to St. Ethelreda's, Ely Place, near Holborn Circus. The enrolment of "Sarah Frances Russell" on 7 February, 1858, is signed by Father William Lockhart, whose acquaintance she had made in Ireland, with which his connexion dated from the mission that gave Father Gentili an honoured grave in Glasnevin. The new associate fulfilled well the obligations of the confraternity, two of which were "to contribute for the adornment and service of the Altar and in all ways promote the honour of the Blessed Sacrament," and "to

receive the Holy Communion frequently and assist often at Mass and Benediction." As for this last promise she had kept it by anticipation for many years, interpreting "often" by "daily". In the summer vacations of that Maynooth student to whom reference has been made too frequently, he and his sister would wend their way together before breakfast to the oldest church then in Belfast, St. Mary's; and the youth would generally ascend to the gallery (deserted on week-days) while the maiden hid herself among the lowly and devout below round the altar, approaching the rails at the *Domine, non sum dignus*. We may guess how fervently she made the following offering for the first time at Father Lockhart's feet, and repeated it often afterwards in her beloved Convent chapel. Some of our readers may like to use it as a prayer for the sake of these associations:—

"My Lord and my Redeemer, I, Thy unworthy servant, moved with gratitude to Thee for Thy adorable presence amongst us in the most holy Sacrament of Thy sacred Body and Blood, and earnestly desiring to unite my heart more closely to Thee and to manifest Thy praise on earth, humbly beseech Thee to admit me this day to the company of Thy servants over all the world who are now engaged in honouring Thy perpetual sacramental presence, to which sacred duty I promise faithfully to devote myself. And may Thy powerful grace assist me, that, keeping Thy divine commandments in this life, I may hereafter be made worthy to join my adoration to that of Thy Saints and Angels in Heaven."

At this time this devotee of the Blessed Sacrament crossed the path of one with whose ardent devotion to the Heart of Jesus she would have sympathized. The goal of her Mother's pilgrimage in visiting England was Beaumont Lodge, the English novitiate of the Society of Jesus. Their visit occurred during the few months when Father George William Clifford filled the office of Socius to the Master of Novices, Father Tracy-Clarke. The Irish novice whom they came to see remembers vividly, after half a century, the smile with which the saintly Father Socius came in to inquire what refreshment he might offer his visitors; and still more vividly he

remembers the smile with which the younger of them replied: "Oh, thank you! We have all now that we want." He remembers also the look of pity with which his sister gazed long and fixedly on a very realistic crucifix that stood upon the mantelpiece of the Chapel. Does it still survive at Manresa, Roehampton, to which the Novitiate migrated shortly afterwards?

On the Holy Thursday after Mother Emmanuel's death one of her young Nuns, Sister M. J. H., wrote to me in the spirit of the day: "This was one of our loved Mother's special feasts. How she used to look forward to this day, and with what loving hands and heart she worked to adorn His resting place, the Altar of Repose! Every available moment of this great feast was spent in choir, and scarcely could she leave at night. She hurried down on Good Friday morning to be the first adorer. All feasts of the Blessed Sacrament were days of joy to her, for you know well that our dear Lord in the sacrament of His love had won her heart. She found in it her joy and consolation always. I often heard her say that, when in any trouble or difficulty, she went and knelt quietly before the Blessed Sacrament, and always came away calm and consoled. She always advised us to do likewise. She had a peculiar way of making every one feel happy and peaceful. We loved to see her coming wherever we might be; her smile made all so happy and bright."

CHAPTER VI.

HER LAST YEARS IN THE WICKED WORLD.

We deemed it best to give, all at once without interruption, in the second and third of these chapters the whole of Mother Emmanuel's simple reminiscences, which were partly but unintentionally a fragment of autobiography. We did so, although we foresaw that this would cause some overlapping and confuse the chronology of our very informal narrative. It may be well to pause now for a moment to consider if there be anything that needs to be set down here, belonging to those earlier years before Sarah Russell succeeded in breaking away from the world—her not very worldly world: for the epithet in the title of this chapter is not meant to be taken quite seriously.

It is strange how completely one is absorbed in one's self, and how little one remembers of the doings and sayings of those around one. I myself have been surprised at finding how very little I can recall of my sister's sayings and doings during that winter (for instance) when, as she has told us, she and I were the only young folk in our Killowen home. That home was "the old-fashioned house by the sea" which is referred to in "The Poor Man's Knock"—the most widely read of my verses on account of its being included in one of the reading books approved of for the Irish National Schools.[1] As it exemplifies one function which contributed to the training of our unromantic heroine, the little poem may be positively the last of our quotations of that particular sort.

[1] In the series published by the Educational Company of Ireland, 89 Talbot Street, Dublin. It is "Junior Book" in the "New School and College Literary Readers".

'Tis many a year, a score and more,
  Since a little boy in blue frock
Would run to open the great hall-door,
Whose latch he scarce could reach from the floor—
  "It is only a poor man's knock".

The harsh word "*beggar*" was under ban
  In that quaint old house by the sea;
And little Blue Frock's announcements ran:
"'Tis a poor little girl—'tis a poor blind man—
  Poor woman with children three".

And when our little boy would say,
  "There's a poor person at the door,"
The sister who carried the keys that day
From a willing mother leave would pray
  To give to him of her store.

But the little boy, ah! not always
  Thus back to the parlour ran.
Often he hushed the whisper of grace,
And only said, with kind voice and face,
  "There's nothing for you, poor man".

"Well, dear, God bless you all the same!"
  Thus meekly they would reply.
Ah! hard little heart, what a pity and shame
To let the poor creatures go as they came—
  Bid them wait till again you try.

Long years have fled. All changed his lot
  Since that era of belt and frock;
Yet oft from the Judge doth he hear in thought,
"I was hungry, and you—you gave Me nought
  When you answered the poor man's knock".

And therefore he'd teach this rhyme, if he could,
  To each little boy in blue frock:
"If you wish to be happy, try to be good,
And think that your Saviour asks you for food
  When you ope to the poor man's knock".

The arrangement referred to in the third of these stanzas, by which the three sisters took their week of housekeeping in turn, belongs rather to a later period, the second sojourn in Newry after the father's death. For the wise Materfamilias, with all her energy and many capabilities, was by no means a Mrs. Newington—to name the heroine of a favourite sketch

of hers, pasted into her scrapbook, about a fussy lady who thought nothing could be done rightly in her house without her own immediate intervention, and who interfered in everybody's business, with the result that everything went wrong, especially on the occasion of a momentous dinner-party. Mrs. Russell, on the contrary, like every able leader, knew how and when to devolve a proper share of housekeeping responsibilities on her subordinates; and one of her devices for training her daughters in useful domestic arts was this plan of handing over to them in regular succession her keys of office.

During one of Sarah's weeks of authority her youngest brother, coming home one day hungry from school at three o'clock, ran as usual to the pantry where the young housekeeper presided, who was not afraid to spoil his appetite by a little preliminary indulgence to beguile the weary interval before dinner. On this occasion he propounded to her a strange experiment which he had just learned:—

> Give me an egg and I'll throw it against the wall,
> And it will neither break, nor crack, nor fall.

In the interest of science, to test this striking statement, S. F. R. gave him an egg to experiment upon. He threw it against the wall, which preserved its equanimity perfectly and neither broke nor cracked nor fell; and then the youthful grammarian explained that the second *it* referred to the noun immediately preceding.[1] It is little to say that the victim greeted the "sell" with a merry, gentle laugh; but it is a good deal to say that in all her life, from youth to age, I never saw her temper ruffled in the least—and this assuredly from no want of strength of will and character.

[1] History repeats itself. The above authentic *bêtise* is matched by the following apocryphal one from an American newspaper:—

"A rather simple-looking lad halted before a blacksmith's shop on his way from school, and eyed the doings of the proprietor with much interest. The brawny smith, dissatisfied with the boy's curiosity, held a piece of red-hot iron suddenly under the youngster's nose, hoping to make him beat a hasty retreat. 'If you'll give me a half dollar, I'll lick it,' said the lad. The smith took from his pocket half a dollar, and held it out. The simple-looking youngster took the coin, licked it, and slowly walked away, whistling."

The three Sisters of Mercy who were at this time three young sisters of a household, exemplified, every one of them, and the youngest perhaps most of all, Cardinal Manning's saying: "The best daughter will make the best nun; that is to say, the best training for the most perfect character, as a disciple or a handmaid of Jesus Christ, is to be found in the natural affections of home". I will quote another witness as to this preparatory stage of Mother Emmanuel's career; and this time it is one who was to serve God in a different vocation as a woman of the world.

"The first time I saw Mother Emmanuel was at her sister Elizabeth's Profession in the Convent of Mercy, Newry. I had been told to notice her. She was very active that day, showing every attention to the guests assembled. She was pretty, fair-complexioned, with wavy, brown hair, and wonderful eyes, large and deep hazel—simply dressed, and in many respects like other young ladies; but there was something particularly attractive about her.

"During the quiet excitement of that morning my sister overheard Miss Mary Denvir (afterwards so much beloved in the same Convent as Mother de Sales) saying to the sister of the Professed, 'Oh, is she not happy?'—and then the answering exclamation, 'Happy!' with eyes uplifted and a look as it were of envy and yearning.

"I was not aware at that time that the younger sister intended also to embrace the religious state; but a few months later I learned that such had always been her purpose. 'Indeed I cannot remember (she said) the beginning of my vocation. I always had the idea as far back as my early childhood, and often, when playing in the nursery, I would put my pinafore over my head like a nun's veil, saying, *I'm a nun now.*'

"I saw her often that winter. She was always the same: kind and affectionate in manner, noticing your work with words of encouragement, and listening to friendly remarks on your neighbour. If anything uncharitable was said, she only reproved the speaker by telling at once some good action of the person run down; but so gently was this done that no

one but the offender perceived it. My mother through life always spoke of Miss Russell as a model of all goodness, and when she wanted to praise some particular friend of earlier days of whom she thought very highly, she would say 'a girl just like Sarah Russell'."

I have not used all the memoranda which this lady has kindly furnished. Some of them will be available later on; but to these remote worldly days belongs the memory of what was perhaps her last enjoyment of a pleasure which had often given her the keenest delight—a sail upon the beautiful Carlingford Lough. "Sailing," she said, "seems to me like poetry, and rowing like prose." And, as they sailed, they sang. "She sang sweetly," says my correspondent, "and could take a splendid second to any song."

This witness to the character and demeanour of our Sister of Mercy before she bade farewell to the world explains, evidently on the authority of Father Patrick O'Neill, why that farewell was so long delayed. After explaining the position of Mrs. Russell who had given her two elder daughters to religion, Miss Vallely (why cut down names needlessly to mere initials?) states that Father O'Neill consulted the holy Coadjutor Bishop, Dr. J. P. Leahy, O.P., as to what was the duty of his penitent in the circumstances. The Bishop replied that, whatever might be expedient in an ordinary case, with such a vocation as Miss Russell's there was no danger in delay.

She was indeed firmly fixed in her vocation. Two worthy men whom I remember, and perhaps others whom I never heard of, pressed her very earnestly to adopt another way of serving God, in a useful life which each of them earnestly desired to share with her. But if there was not the slightest peril to her religious vocation in what must have seemed to her at that age a very tedious delay of indefinite duration, there was a severe trial for her patience and for that evenness and brightness of disposition which then and always characterized her.

One of her sources of merit during those unsettled years in which her religious calling was held in abeyance was the

cheerfulness with which she chimed in with her mother's inclinations when they ran counter to her own. Her mother was fond of travelling—not on the Continent but "going about"—whereas she herself liked to have a fixed director for her conscience, fixed duties, the same church to frequent every morning, to visit every day.

One useful function she fulfilled during this interregnum—she was housekeeper to her brother Charles during the two or three years that he was a householder in Belfast, engaged in the very active practice of his profession as a solicitor while preparing for the English bar at which so great a career awaited him. We have had a glimpse of her in this housekeeping capacity in an earlier and brighter page of this sketch. She presided over her little community with an unselfish sweetness and quiet efficiency that augured well for the happiness of the large communities over which she was soon to be placed. She resembled St. Teresa in her love of spotless cleanliness. Her Maynooth brother, while under her benign jurisdiction during the holidays, used to laugh at the frequency of her hand-washings. And so, with regard to all under her charge, she maintained a gentle regime of perfect order and neatness and scrupulous purity, while making everyone around her comfortable, master and servant and visitor.

The picture of what she was at this time of her life came up before my mind long afterwards when writing a private note about the picture of the Mater Admirabilis or the Madonnina del Giglio in the Sacred Heart Convent at the Trinità de' Monti in Rome. This painting represents our Blessed Lady as a girl in a court adjoining the Temple of Jerusalem, spinning at her distaff; a lily bends its head towards her as if in homage, while beside her on the ground lies her work-basket with her book open upon it—"as [thus I wrote in a little *cahier* which has survived forty years] Sarah used to sit, after dusting the parlour and arranging everything so neatly."

In those days and down to her latest day there was "un certain *Venez-a-moi* répandu sur sa belle personne," as Père Charles Daniel says of Blessed Margaret Mary where he treats of "La Bienheureuse au Parloir". Though some of the

expressions are not quite appropriate to this brother and sister, I will quote here from Canon Sheehan's "Under the Cedars and the Stars" four beautiful sentences, the third of which is the most questionable. "Of all human love that of a sister is the most abiding and unselfish. In a mother's love there is a kind of identification with her child, his triumphs, his defeats, which, by the reflection on herself, takes away the absolute disinterestedness. Conjugal love is more intense, but for that reason more intermittent. But there is not a trace of self in that earnest wistful gaze which a beloved sister casts after the poor young fellow who has just gone out from the sanctity of home-life into the world's arena."

From the office that she had filled so well in her brother's household we may suppose her to be deposed, nay, she had abdicated some months before the interesting event which the local newspapers chronicled in the usual way: "August 10th., at St. Malachy's Church, Belfast, by the Very Rev. C. W. Russell, D.D., President of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth (Uncle of the Bridegroom), Charles Russell to Ellen, eldest daughter of the late Dr. Joseph Stevenson Mulholland of Belfast." It is very significant that only five days later, on 15 August, Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Bridegroom's youngest sister joined their eldest sister in the Mercy Convent of their native town. Her entrance, we may be certain, made that Lady-day in Harvest a more joyful festival even than usual for several beside herself, especially the two sisters, now doubly her sisters, who preceded her in coming into the world and in leaving the world, in both senses of that phrase. The three might well have made their own of May Probyn's pretty dedication of "Pansies":—

Three, we learned together
At our mother's knee—
Three, through altered weather
The highway travel we—
God send in Heaven's gold ether
We stand before Him, three.

No need to echo that last prayer for our three Sisters of Mercy. They are together. Jesus will be for ever their Emmanuel.

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY YEARS IN RELIGION.

The probation of this very promising postulant lasted the usual time, and we are pretty sure that at the end of it there was not the slightest difficulty about her "getting her votes". Her Reception took place on 2 March, 1859; and, after her two years of noviceship, 8 April, 1861, was the date of her Profession,[1] when she made her vows as a Sister of Mercy.

Three years after her own training was over, she was chosen to train others. She was made Mistress of Novices on 12 August, 1864. She was greatly loved by her novices. One of them says she used to be glad to have some fault to accuse herself of to her Mother, she was sure to get such nice advice and instruction from her. The young Mistress of Novices was like the King in St. Ignatius's military parable, who asks no sacrifice from his followers of which he has not himself first given them the example.

The Newry Convent at that time was still in its first youth. On 26 June, 1855, the Sisters of Mercy had, as we have seen elsewhere, come from Kinsale, the head of the little band being Mother Mary Catherine O'Connor, and another being the Newry novice, Sister Mary Aquin Russell, who was the first to be professed in the new Convent, upon Wednesday

[1] Many readers not belonging to the Catholic Church will read these pages; and it is well to explain to them that a first probation of five or six months precedes the Reception, that is, the formal admission to the noviceship. The noviceship occupies two years, at the end of which (if all goes well) the Profession takes place, that is, the Making of the Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, to which some Orders add the Vow of Instruction of the Poor.

in Easter Week, March 26, 1856, as we see by a letter[1] of the Coadjutor Bishop, Dr. J. P. Leahy, who preached on the occasion—though the old Bishop, Dr. Blake, who presided at the sacred ceremony, mentions Tuesday after *Dominica in Albis* as the date in a letter printed in the "Life of Mother Baptist". So hard is it to get the real facts of history! Here the Coadjutor was right.

But, young as the Newry Convent was, it was already, after less than ten years, considered able to send out a colony; and Rostrevor was the first to urge its claims on the Mother-house of the diocese. Its excellent pastor was then Father Bernard Mooney, who wished this first branch-house to be under the charge of Mother Mary Emmanuel; but he died in November, 1864, and his successor, Father Patrick O'Neill, asked for her elder sister, Mother Mary Aquin. Very probably he did so out of his fatherly interest in the general prosperity of the Sisters of Mercy in the diocese, whereas his predecessor had wished to do the very best he could for his own particular parish. Father Mooney's relations to the Order were different from those of Father O'Neill, who had been the chief means of establishing it in Newry. The venerable Michael Blake, Bishop of Dromore, was indeed a devoted friend and ally of the Foundress, Mother Catherine Macaulay, and had laid the foundation-stone of her first Convent in Baggot Street, Dublin. But he was now an octogenarian and could never have accomplished his work but for the energy of the Administrator of his Cathedral Parish. And, therefore, when Father O'Neill conceived the desire of becoming a Jesuit, the Coadjutor Bishop wrote to him on 7 April, 1856: "If you cannot make up your mind to abandon the idea of joining a religious body, at all events defer it for a few years until the Sisters of Mercy have got over their difficulties. You know the ways of Dr. Blake and can manage him far better than either I or those poor Sisters can."

These words occur in the letter which mentions the Profession of Sister Mary Aquin. When Father O'Neill succeeded Father Mooney as P.P. of Rostrevor, in November, 1864, he

[1] Printed in "The Irish Monthly," Vol. XVIII (1890), p. 321.

lost no time in bringing the Sisters of Mercy to the beautiful little town (for it is more than a village) which a very minor poet described thus a little later :— [1]

It lies 'twixt the sea and the mountain,
Or rather the bay and the hill,
Which cool the warm breath of the summer,
And take from the winter its chill.

It nestles 'mid oak-trees and beeches
That stretch their green arms o'er the street,
Whose breadth, to its length nearly equal,
Expands where the four roadways meet.

As you wind by the bay's breezy margin,
Rostrevor you mark from afar,
Betrayed by its spire of Our Lady's,
And joyful you cry : "Here we are!"—

Betrayed by its spire gleaming brightly
High o'er its embowering trees :
As the breath of the sea is detected
In this bracing and life-giving breeze.

That white granite spire of Our Lady's
On the oaks and the beeches looks down,
And it cries up to heaven for a blessing
On the simple Arcadian town.

A blessing in sooth is the convent
That hides in the shadow serene
Of that beautiful Church of Our Lady,
Of Mary our Mother and Queen.

The convent and church crown the village
Which clusters in peace at their feet ;
A stream from the hills saunters past it,
Reluctant to leave scene so sweet.

The Rostrevor convent is so closely united with the parish church as almost to form a part of it, the Nuns' choir opening upon the sanctuary. But the Convent had not yet risen up under the holy shadow of God's temple when Sister Mary Aquin and her little band began their first branch-convent. While it was building, they were lodged on the opposite side of the road in the house which the priests had vacated in

[1] "A Picnic at Rostrevor," in "Idyls of Killowen," p. 13.

their favour. The landlord of the place was fortunately a benevolent and excellent man, Mr. David Ross of Bladensburgh, whose family (with two exceptions, one of them himself) joined the Catholic Church about this time, his eldest son being the late Father Robert Ross, S.J. Sir John Ross of Bladensburgh is the present head of the family.

In spite of her wretched health the "Sister-in-charge"—for Rostrevor has never aspired to independence and a Mother Superior of its own—devoted herself most unselfishly and energetically to the hard and ungrateful labour of collecting funds for the building and equipment of the Convent and schools. One of her expedients for making money was to pre-engage long beforehand for this cause the first public sermon of her Jesuit brother, who was then enjoying two or three years of studious exile at Laval in France. The appeal that he made after his return in November, 1866, fills some of the last pages of this book; for it may fairly be considered a chapter in the present story, explaining as it does the manifold beauty of the vocation of a Sister of Mercy living in the very circumstances of our Mother Mary Emmanuel and amidst the same surroundings.

Another relic of her dear sister's gentle reign at Rostrevor is a letter that has chanced to survive, addressed by her to her revered Pastor on the feast of his name-saint, the Patron of Ireland. There is no date except "Feast of St. Patrick," but it must have been 17 March, 1866 or 1867. The former was the first St. Patrick's Day for the Sister of Mercy at Rostrevor; the latter was for Mrs. Arthur Russell (who is mentioned here) her last St. Patrick's Day on earth.

"My Very Dear Father:

"It would be impossible to tell you how affectionately my heart wishes you a most happy Feast. I think you would believe this, even did I not say a word, but I have endeavoured to give a more real proof of my deep and lasting gratitude by soliciting many prayers and communions for you to-day. I need hardly say all your children in your own little convent have given you all the Spirituals of to-day, as well

as our active duties. I was so glad to be awake last night when the clock struck twelve, that I might be early in my petitions for you. If God hears all the prayers that are ascending for you, far and near on this glorious Feast, you may make up your mind to be a second St. Patrick. May the most adorable Heart of Jesus surround you with Its love, and may your dear Patron just ask this one favour for his devoted client, that his light, shining undimmed by trial, suffering, or persecution, may be the guiding star to many, many souls; the encouragement of the weary and dejected; the consoler of the afflicted, and a saviour to the erring and abandoned. My dear Father, with heartfelt affection and gratitude, believe me your devoted child in the Sacred Heart.

"Sister Mary Aquinas."

I am glad to see here Aquinas; for really "Sister Mary Aquin," though very common in our convents, is a mistake, arising perhaps from the fact that many of our spiritual books come to us through the French language which speaks of "St Thomas d'Aquin". But the Italian town is Aquino and the Saint's appellative is Aquinas. Why should a nun be called by the mispronounced French name of an Italian town, or called after a town at all? With all the devotion that has sprung up for St. Anthony of Padua, I have never heard of a Sister Mary Padua.

The postscript of this letter asks the holy priest to "accept the accompanying humble offerings from your little community in the Little Convent under the Hill". Some of the articles, she adds, were sent by "poor darling Mamma as a token that she forgives you for something you did—I believe about the Ballybot houses": namely, declining the gift of them as the site and nucleus of the Newry Convent of Mercy, as Mother Mary Emmanuel has told us in her "Recollections".

The Rostrevor Convent, from the size and circumstances of the place, has always remained a branch Convent dependent on the Mother House, with no disposition to set up on its

own account like the next foundation that we shall have to chronicle. Members of the Newry Community were from the beginning sent down occasionally to this beautiful and well-sheltered little town which guide-books have sometimes called the Montpellier of Ireland. The thoughtfulness of superiors arranged in this way that the two sisters—sisters by human as well as by sacred ties—should be sometimes together in Rostrevor, which for them seemed a part of dear old Killowen. Once, when writing to the subject of the present sketch during one of these visits to Rostrevor, I remember saying something about the change that must have come over Killowen since the old times, now that there were introduced among them steam-ploughs and Sisters of Mercy and all the modern improvements. Mother Emmanuel in one of her letters at the time said that, as she walked along the Killowen roads on her way to some sick woman who had begged for a visit, she smiled at recalling my words, and she blesssd God that she was there, "doing her duty as a Sister of Mercy, not merely pleasure-seeking—and (she added) there was pleasure in that thought".

A more important and more difficult mission than the Rostrevor branch was next to be undertaken. On 6 August, 1866, a chapter was held in the Mother House in Catherine Street, Newry, in which Sister Mary Emmanuel was appointed to take charge of the Convent which the Bishop and local priests had requested the Sisters to establish in Lurgan.

Lurgan is a very busy and flourishing manufacturing town in the county of Armagh and in the diocese of Dromore, second in importance to Newry, to which it approaches closely in population and which in some commercial matters it probably surpasses. Its mills give employment to a great many "hands," as they are significantly called in this context. But "hands" have souls; and so many hundreds of men and women, boys and girls, toiling, toiling, toiling on together, are liable to many an evil suggestion from demons visible and invisible. What a blessing for such a population to have a Community of Sisters among them influencing not their own sex alone by their various ministries of mercy!

When it was announced to the girls of her Sunday school that Mother Emmanuel was leaving them, their grief was very great and showed itself in ways that impressed very much Miss Taylor, a convert from Anglicanism, who was present and who afterwards became a Nun and founded an institute that has several houses in England and Ireland. On 20 August the little band of missionaries (not bound for a very distant mission) left by an early train for their new home—Mother Emmanuel, Mother de Sales Denvir, Sister Francis Lawless, and Sister Angela—the lay-sister who had been received and professed along with her and who was to follow her also into the other world a few months after her death. They were accompanied by Dr. Thomas McGivern, afterwards Bishop of Dromore, and were received on their arrival by Dr. William O'Brien, the venerable Vicar-General of the Diocese, and his curates, who gave them a warm welcome. Sister Mary Vincent, Sister Mary Stanislaus, and Sister Mary Magdalen joined them by a later train. They were the first nuns ever seen by most of the inhabitants.

The Orange spirit was (and is) very rabid in certain classes of the Lurgan population. In some districts a Catholic could not live. The introduction of a religious community was not without its dangers. So hostile was the Protestant element that, even after the Sisters of Mercy had pursued their beneficent mission for nearly a year, they ran the risk of being the victims of the bigotry which in many places in the north of Ireland becomes fury and even frenzy once a year—namely, on the recurrence of the anniversary of the Battle of Aughrim, 12 July. At this ill-omened date in 1867 the Orange mob assembled in the street adjoining the Convent. Mother Mary Aquinas was ill in the infirmary, having been sent to Lurgan, probably in order to be under her sister's care. No doubt disquieting rumours had reached them during the day, and when word came to Mother Emmanuel that the mad crowd had come, she tried to conceal her anxiety in order not to frighten her sick sister; but she confessed afterwards that her knees were trembling under her and she could with difficulty keep quiet. When she looked out on the front of the

Convent, the mob reminded her (she said) of infuriated wild Indians. The street was black with the crowd, every one stooping down for stones to fling at the Convent. These, however, fortunately fell just short of the windows; for, when they were building the Convent, Father John McConville had got a number of young lads to throw stones from the street as far as they could across the Convent grounds, and directed that beyond the farthest stone-throw the foundations for the Convent buildings should be dug. Strong iron gates and railing separated from the street the grounds in front of the Convent. Of course the perils of the first Twelfth of July that the Sisters spent in Lurgan had been foreseen, and the schools were full of their friends ready to defend them. The priest had secured for them as much protection as they could from the police. But even after the furious mob had dispersed, Mother Emmanuel, fearing they might try to enter by the rear, spent the night at the altar-steps, to be guarded by the Blessed Sacrament and to guard It.

The fine old P.P. left the work to be done by his curates, Father James McKenna (who was his successor) and Father McConville who died a few years later, having been for a short time P.P. of Tullylish. This was the good priest who emphasized his high estimate of the tact and ability of the "Sister-in-charge" by a rather invidious reference to three male members of her family, including Dr. Russell of Maynooth. "There's more sense in Mother Emmanuel's wee finger than there is in the Jesuit, the Lawyer, and the President all together." Quaint extravagances of this sort are not suggested by persons of merely ordinary merit. Readers of our sketch of Mother Baptist may remember how in like manner a shrewd man of the world made Lord Russell of Killowen a term of disparaging comparison with the sister who died two years before him, as he is here linked to his disadvantage with the sister who died two years after him.

Some days after that Twelfth of July that has been referred to, the two sisters were summoned to their mother's deathbed in Newry. As a benefactress—and one who had reared up such daughters and given them to Religion might well claim

to be considered a benefactress, even if she had not served them in more material ways—Mrs. Russell had been allowed to live her last years with her maid under the Convent roof or at least in a house connected with the Convent; and so her children knelt beside her at the last. But Mother Emmanuel has already described for us that happy death which occurred thirty-five years before her own; and now we need not do anything more than try to gain the indulgence applicable only to the souls in purgatory, which Pope Leo XIII attached to each pious repetition of the prayer: "Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them".

CHAPTER VIII.

HER WORK AS SUPERIOR.

Institutions are like individuals in some respects, and for both the early years are important as giving a certain bent that greatly influences their future.

> A pebble in the streamlet scant
> Has turned the course of many a river;
> A dewdrop on the baby plant
> May warp the giant oak for ever.

Mother Emmanuel had less than three years to exercise this initial influence in the young community of Lurgan; but she lost no time in setting to work and using most efficiently all her opportunities of doing good. The zeal and thoughtfulness of the good priests, especially of Father John McConville, had not only built the Convent but furnished the cells and other apartments before the arrival of the Sisters; and so they were able to begin at once. In a week they opened their schools, which were officially recognized by the Board of National Education on the first of the next month; and about the same time they added immensely to their hard day's work by opening an evening school for grown girls employed in the factories during the day. An orphanage was soon opened also, but on a very different scale from the beautiful institution which now stands amidst its own fields and gardens on a height about a mile from the town, looking down on the railway trains as they fly past between Belfast and Dublin.

The year 1870 was the fateful summer of the Franco-Prussian war which changed Alsace into Elsass and Lorraine into Lothringen. In the May of that year the Sisters of Mercy of Newry and its branch Convents chose Mother

Emmanuel as their Superior, and she had to bid good-bye to Lurgan. The present Superior, Mother de Sales McGeeney, says that she still lives there in the hearts of the poor. The domestic annals of the Convent record that their loved Mother returned to visit them in March, 1872, and again in February, 1879, when Mother Baptist, home on her one visit from California, accompanied her younger sister. In June, 1880, when the doctors insisted on change of air for Mother Emmanuel, who was recovering from a severe illness, her choice fell on the Lurgan Convent in preference to many convents which would have been delighted to have her as their guest. Her only other visit to Lurgan seems to have been in April 1898, when the Sisters mention that they saw she was breaking down.

Though Lurgan long ago threw off the not very tyrannical yoke of Newry, and has prospered independently for many years under the late Mother Gertrude O'Hagan of holy and amiable memory, this has made little change in the intimate relations with the Mother House. On the very last of her Christmas Eves, Mother Emmanuel sent her Christmas greetings as usual. She was not content with sending a kind message through some other correspondent, but wrote the following letter with her own hand, though some words in the manuscript show that she saw only imperfectly the characters she was forming.

"My Dearest Revd. Mother:

"To you and to each dear Mother and Sister in St. Joseph's I heartily wish a very joyous, holy Christmas and a happy New Year and many returns. I hope it brings with it many blessings, spiritual and temporal. I am delighted to hear of your real, earnest good work for the warm-hearted people of Lurgan, which gladdens me specially as I was really sorry when I had to leave it. You have the honourable distinction of being *solus* in Ireland with your grand grant. The dear Bishop was quite proud when telling me of it at our Distribution yesterday. God prosper your work. Amen. Our Sisters must be glad those two premium days are over, for

they must have worked hard in both schools to furnish such enjoyable and creditable entertainments.

"With much love, especially to Sister Sarah, and thanking her for her letter,

"Ever, dearest Mother,

"Yours affectionately in J. C.

"Sister Mary Emmanuel."

During the rest of her life Mother Emmanuel was constantly Superior, except for a necessary triennium at the end of each legal term of six years. That is, she was left in office for the longest space of time allowed by the Rules of the Order without a dispensation from the Holy See; and she was re-elected after the shortest legitimate interval. Thus her first term of "Superiority" ended in 1876 when she was made Assistant to the new Reverend Mother, Mary de Sales Denvir; and in May, 1879, she was elected Superior once more. After six years, in 1885, she was made Assistant to Rev. Mother Agnes O'Halloran (now Superior of the Convent at Bessbrook). In 1888, again elected Superior, for the fifth time, as there is a formal election every third year. In 1894 she became Assistant to Mother Magdalen Burke *nunc feliciter regnans*—till 1897 when she was elected Superior for the last time; for, alas! the year 1900 found her eyes and her health in such a state that the Sisters were forced to spare her and to leave her free from the responsibilities of office. As usual, however, she was Mother Assistant till the end.

Before citing some testimonies as to the manner in which Mother Emmanuel discharged her various duties through all these years, let us mention a few events set down in the Convent annals, of which the subject of our sketch might have said, but certainly would not have said, *Quorum pars magna fui.*

In August, 1879, the Home for the Aged Poor was opened in Kilmorey Street, Newry, through the munificent charity of Mr. Thomas Fegan, who afterwards erected in a higher part of the grounds large and commodious buildings, furnished with everything useful for their holy purposes. This noble institution was placed under the care of the Sisters of Mercy. One of them, who spent fourteen years in the Home, reports

as follows the directions that Mother Emmanuel gave to the Sisters who had charge of the good women that in their old age sought a shelter here: "Remember, Sisters, when you are attending the poor old people whom God may send in to us —remember that many of them saw happy days, and now they come after hard trials to end their lives here. Try to make their last days happy and bright. Never say anything harsh or hard to them. Treat them as you would treat your own mother or friends. Try to give them pleasure and get them anything that would help to make them happy. Never refuse them anything they may ask for, if you can possibly get it by asking for it yourself. God will see how you treat them, His dear poor. Be very respectful to the Miss [Blanks]: remember they are the sisters of a priest and should get respect. Always say a kind word if you cannot give them what they ask. Make them feel this is a home, not a workhouse, by being kind in every way. Never let them see you feel attending them. If their clothes are not what they should be, when coming in, hide it all and be very charitable in word and deed. God will reward you for all you do to them."

I do not know whether this report is drawn up on Boswell's plan of faithful note-taking or like the speeches in Livy, all out of the historian's own head; but it is so good that I will link with it a letter received by the writer from Mother Emmanuel long afterwards. The first paragraph alludes, I am sure, to the death of Sister Winifrid Lupton, which happened in October, 1866, and made every succeeding October a sort of *memento mori* for her sister to whom this letter was addresed from Rostrevor, 23 October, 1897. I think that those who are not familiar with Convent ways will be glad to get a glimpse behind the scenes and to see the terms on which Nuns stand with one another.

"My dearest Sister Mary Philomena:

"It is fitting that a Jubilarian should be addressed on the best paper in the house. And now what can I say on it half grand enough for the occasion? Did you ever believe you could reach the venerable age in religion of a *real silver Jubilarian*, especially as the noted days of October just passed

always kept you, each succeeding year, expecting a solemn event to take place which would have hindered you ever arriving so far?

"Well, to speak in earnest and as I feel, I wish you a great deal of happiness and grace to begin in real earnest and with renewed vigour the life that dates from to-morrow, thanking God you 'have lived so long and have done so little harm,' and that the 'harm' will be nowhere when the great day of reward will come. In plain words, be a very good child from this out.

"I am very sorry I have not a single thing to send, and I will only have to pay interest when I go home and give the best I have. I hope some book you like was got for you and that you will be very rich in all sorts of nice things to-morrow evening. I hope dear Mrs. Lupton is quite well now. I was glad to hear of Miss Ursula's arrival. [Probably some newborn baby.]

"With loving wishes for a happy day, and another such in twenty-five years,

"Your loving Mother in J. C.

"Sr. Mary Emmanuel."

One of the most useful works that the Sisters of Mercy undertake is the sheltering of servants when out of place, trying to procure situations for these inmates of the House of Mercy (as this part of the Convent establishment is called) and meanwhile training them better and giving them suitable employment. I hold, and I have somewhere proclaimed my faith in print, that a good employer is a philanthropist of the best kind, and that well-earned wages are the best sort of alms. Among the very few papers sent to me from Mother Emmanuel's scanty archives was a letter of four pages from a Belfast lady, not a Catholic, making most minute and considerate arrangements about servant-maids that Mother Emmanuel was sending her. I will venture to name this excellent lady —Lady Pirrie, whose husband is head of the great ship-building firm of Harland and Wolff, named so often of late in connexion with Mr. Pierpont Morgan's famous "Shipping Combine".

CHAPTER IX.

SPIRITUAL NOTES AND COUNSELS.

When I remember that a passage in one of Mother Emmanuel's letters, written before she had yet assumed that name, pleased me so much that I preserved it, and put it into print as far back as 1870, I wonder that I did not try in all the after years, by coaxing or by stratagem, to get some little spiritual writing from her, and especially some expression of her heart's feelings about the overmastering influence of her soul's life, devotion to the Blessed Sacrament—some hints of what she said in her heart, and what was said to her during her countless holy and happy hours before the tabernacle of the Convent chapel. But do we not all fail to get the best, not only out of ourselves but out of some others, who perhaps needed only our help to make them give their best to God? We are too prone, most of us, with all our love for friends and kinsfolk, not to appreciate sufficiently in certain respects those who are nearest and dearest to us.

How sweet it were if without feeble fright
Or dying of the dreadful, beauteous sight,
An Angel came to us, and we could bear
To see him issue through the silent air
At evening in our room, and bend on ours
His divine eyes, and bring us from his bowers
News of dear friends and children who have never
Been dead indeed, as we shall know for ever.
Alas! we know not what we daily see
About our hearths—Angels that are to be,
Or may be, if they will, and we prepare
Their souls and ours to meet in upper air—
A child, a sister, friend whose soft heart sings
In unison with ours, breeding its future wings.

I have changed one word in Leigh Hunt's lines to suit them better to this context. But, indeed, those who lived with Mother Emmanuel were not likely to forget that they were enjoying the company of one who was sure to be soon a companion of the angels. We have already seen how an inspired child was reminded by her very voice of the bright spirits invisible around them.

> I sometimes close my eyes and think
> 'Tis an angel that I hear.

Sister Mary Emmanuel did not set down on paper the lights and inspirations that her soul received in communing with God in prayer. She was too busy and too earnest in carrying out the inspirations of grace to have time for recording and discussing them in spiritual diaries. A few, indeed, of her Sisters took notes of things said by her; but the only relics of this kind in her own handwriting that have come into my hands are a few faded pencilled scraps that seem to record counsels given to her in the confessional, during one of the four retreats conducted by Father O'Callaghan, O.P., now Bishop of Cork, while he was Prior in Newry. The note is dated 10 August, 1876.

"Have courage. God begins for you as it were a new life. Prayer for to-day must begin yesterday. Going to bed, say acts of contrition, sorrow, love, and thanksgiving. Waking, give Him your first thoughts: do not be thinking of anything you may have to suffer, your duties, etc. Give God these precious moments before going to Choir, and thus, beginning with prayer, all will go well with you during the day. Have courage, then, Sister."

August 13*th*.

"It is every one's experience, if we go in before our Lord and kneel quietly down, all the troubles which have burdened us will be lightened, and a ray of light, as it were from the Tabernacle, falling upon them, will disperse the clouds, and the trouble will all melt away."

Among the autographs of Thomas Davis that Sir Charles Gavan Duffy gave me, I found a little hymn to the Blessed

Virgin. I could not be sure that the words were his own; but I should be almost as much pleased at finding Davis copying such a tribute to Our Lady as writing it himself. In the same manner many readers will value the following hints which Mother Emmanuel thought worth writing down, though I am not sure that they are her own. In one of the three small and cheap notebooks that she left behind her, she wrote :—

Duties of Sisters of Mercy.

Community.—Love, Forbearance, Union.
House of Mercy.—Care, Prudence, Considerateness.
Schools.—Zeal for Souls, Labour.
Orphanage.—Vigilance, Wisdom.
Visitation.—Charity, Self-forgetfulness.
Parlour.—Edification, Charity.
The Poor in the Hall.—Relief and Advice.
The Home in Kilmorey Street.—Old and Young, Sick and Well.
Rostrevor with its various duties—Schools, the Poor, the Sisters, etc.

Here is a very wise saying, which is probably her own :—

"Our innate pride is much better curbed by the humours of others and the treatment we receive from others than by any voluntary mortifications we choose for ourselves."

And here are the "Means for acquiring Meekness and Patience" which Mother Emmanuel either wrote out of her own heart or adopted from some one else, but which she certainly carried out in practice with great success :—

"On waking in the morning regard Almighty God as present in the centre of your soul, and firmly resolve to strive more perfectly than ever to walk before Him in meekness and humility. At time of prayer and Communion, and often during the day, beg of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you a meek and humble heart. Avoid all hurry and impetuosity in the discharge of your duties. Keep a watch over the risings of pride which prompts one to feel angry when disobeyed or not attended to. Make a sacrifice to God of the

impatient remark that nature may be inclined to utter on such occasions. Imitate our Divine Lord who appeared as one 'not having reproofs in His mouth'. Bear with the troublesome, ignorant, or ungrateful. If obliged to correct or reprove, let it be with the meekness and sweetness of Christ who would not 'break the bruised reed nor extinguish the smoking flax'. In consideration of your own nothingness and sinfulness, be respectful, affable, obliging, sweet and patient towards all. Let the contradictions or annoyances you may experience from others remind you of your many offences against God, and let this remembrance induce you to bear cheerfully the wrath of the Lord because you have sinned against Him."

Mother Emmanuel gave one of her young Sisters the following recipe for the cure of ill-humour. "When that unaccountable feeling of irritation comes over me," she said, "I just go into the chapel and ask myself what has caused this feeling. Well, I find perhaps that some one has said or done something that has displeased me. If this be the case, I say a little prayer for the person. But if, as is often the case, I find the fault is my own, some mistake, some imperfection, then I make an act of contrition, and I come out all right." Mother Emmanuel said she had followed this plan for years and with full success; and she was greatly pleased when, a year later, the young nun told her what a help it had been to her also.

Here is what she said to some novice who was about to be professed in November, 1900:—

"I was just looking at you on the corridor, thinking of the happiness in store for you and wondering if you realized it. This happy feeling does not remain; it may for a time; but when you go back to your ordinary duties, the usual routine, the care of everyday life, when you have responsibilities and are left more to yourself, it goes away. But the best means of preserving it, is to keep yourself constantly in God's presence and to practise purity of intention. Do everything for God." And then she went on with more minute details of Convent life, exclaiming at the end: "How wonderful to think that till the end of our lives we shall be committing faults, and

yet Almighty God forgives us freely each time we go and ask His forgiveness."

Isabel Vanderstraaten was born at Ceylon, but in spite of her foreign name and foreign birth she was niece to the first Newry Superior, Mother Mary Catherine O'Connor. She soon joined her aunt's community and was a most edifying Religious till her death in 1910. She was always bright and amiable in spite of the distressing affliction of deafness. In some notes that she sent me soon after Mother Emmanuel's death she guarantees the exactness of her report of remarks made by that beloved Superior during a certain Retreat, when at eight o'clock p.m. a chapter from the Rule was read with a commentary from the "Guide" drawn up by Mother Francis Bridgeman of Kinsale, followed by ten minutes' talk by Mother Emmanuel. At one time she spoke of Recreation as a sacred duty. "Does the silent moody Sister feel this? If so, she must overcome herself and try to contribute her share to the general pleasure. Many a good act of mortification may be performed during Recreation: speaking when disinclined, listening politely when bored or very tired with what is said, consenting cheerfully to reading when we may be more inclined to talk, speaking in a quiet tone, and listening patiently to seniors. We should be better Religious if we were more silent, for silence helps recollection, prayer, and union with God. How much more fervent would be our visits to the Blessed Sacrament and our preparation for Holy Communion, how much more edifying we should be in the parlour, how much more respected in school, if our manner were more recollected and calm!"

Another time she said: "Here I will take the opportunity of saying what I think of feast-day presents. One of the greatest pleasures a generous soul knows is that of bestowing gifts and so giving gratification to others. I think, therefore, that to deny oneself that pleasure must be a true exercise of poverty. I think our presents should never be more than a little picture, *Agnus Dei*, scapulars, etc.,—all neatly done, if time permits, and they can be done without taking one minute from our appointed duties."

As this Retreat was in August and as her feast was kept within the Octave of Corpus Christi, it was then nearly a year ahead. Therefore she refers to it in these terms: "Far off as it is, I give notice that, if I am alive for another feast-day, not a word, public or private, is to be said about it to parents or children, except to ask for prayers, for I think the children should be taught to pray for those who work in their service. Neither postulants nor any others are to be asked or allowed to make presents. Even Masses should be few, for it seems to me not consistent with holy poverty to have a Novena of Masses said, it is not like really poor people. For some feasts that are coming I have refused to give leave for anything but a few materials for *Agnus Deis*, etc. So I do hope this is well understood. I might hesitate about saying so much, only I have good authority for doing it."

Another of these *avis* is about kindness to the poor people coming for alms—"Serving them kindly, not keeping them waiting, begging for them, if we have nothing". She ends by urging the Sisters to make resolutions to keep more recollected, to dislike going to the parlour, not to encourage long visits, and to pay the visit to the Blessed Sacrament afterwards as fervently as possible in order to do away with any harm they may have received there.

God seems to have linked many graces for many persons with the choice of Christmas gifts made by a young Maynooth professor at Christmas in 1843. Dr. Russell was, all his life, very thoughtful and generous about those little observances of kinship and friendship, and that Christmas he did not forget a houseful of children on the northern shore of Carlingford Bay. He did not choose picture-books or stories, but he sent to the three girls the Missal in English and to the two little boys the same in a smaller edition just published by James Duffy, then of Anglesea Street, Dublin. That little Missal influenced greatly the younger of the boys; and the youngest of the girls said the same of herself towards the end of her life. She was always very devout and exact in follow-

ing the liturgy of the Mass.[1] She used her experience for the benefit of others, teaching the older girls in the Convent school how to use the Missal. Nay, after her death she might seem to have employed the Missal for the good of a soul that was very dear to her. A kinsman had married very happily, but with one drawback—his young wife was not a Catholic. Mother Emmanuel prayed fervently and constantly that she might receive the gift of Faith, but she died four years before the object of her prayers was gained. She had counted so confidently on the conversion of this dear soul that she had set aside a Missal to be given to her when she was able to use it. Four years later her successor as Superior of the Newry Convent of Mercy sent it to the husband of the lady. He thanked her and said he would value the gift very much, evidently thinking that it concerned himself alone. But in a few days he wrote again: "You will be surprised at getting another letter from me so soon, but I want to let you know my good news. Mary was received into the Church on Friday last. It was an entire secret and surprise for me, for I knew nothing about it till it was an accomplished fact. But most wonderful of all is that the very day when the Missal arrived she had definitely made up her mind to take the step. I need hardly tell you how overjoyed I am, and my happiness is only tinged with a little sadness at the thought that Mother Emmanuel is not alive to rejoice with us all on earth. We feel that we owe much to her prayers."

Looking over the earlier pages of this book with a view to avoiding repetitions here, I am struck by the close likeness between the two sisters. Whole pages might be transferred from one to the other with strict adherence to truth. Various witnesses select as Mother Baptist's chief characteristics charity, calmness, sympathy; and these are precisely the features chosen as the most striking in the character of Mother Emmanuel. Nor need this resemblance between not sisters only but all who embrace the same vocation surprise us;

[1] Quite recently the conversion of a very gifted woman to the Catholic Faith was completed by the mere reading of the Canon of the Mass. "I felt that this was what I wanted."

for all who try to copy the same Divine Model must according to the measure of their success grow like to one another. I have had the privilege of reading an unpublished sketch of Mother de Ricci Gavan of the Dominican Convent, Drogheda, a kinswoman of Mr. John Dillon, M.P. Many traits are described in terms that exactly suit Mother Emmanuel, as where it is said that "her warm heart made her very sympathetic in the family troubles and home anxieties of her novices. She took an affectionate interest in all the members of their families and made their joys and sorrows her own. This motherly sympathy was particularly helpful to young religious who usually suffer so much from home-sickness and anxiety about the loved ones whom they have left behind them in the world."

I will indulge in a much longer extract from this domestic biography, not only because every word might be written of Mother Emmanuel, but also in order that the reader may be reminded of the sanctity that is sheltered in our holy convents and may revere the memory of Mother de Ricci herself.

"Few who came in contact with her at all could fail to be impressed by her spirit of prayer. She really lived in its atmosphere, and one would be tempted to say that the Divine Prisoner in the Tabernacle had no more ardent adorer. When in prayer, she seemed absorbed in God; her whole heart went out to His interests, the Church, the Order. Poor sinners were ever the objects of her intercession, and to see her, a nun advanced in years, kneeling upright in her stall, occupied with God alone, one would be inclined to think that prayers such as hers could not fail to be heard. If she were wanted while at prayer, the messenger would often have to wait for a few minutes before she could succeed in attracting her attention, with such difficulty did her thoughts return to earth."

We pass over some sentences, though these too were verified in Mother Emmanuel; but still more the following testimony from the same unnamed witness applies, word for word, to her:—

"The spirit of prayer and the virtues of patience and re-

signation only attain perfection after hard struggle with self; they grow with years. But the gift of largeness of heart and power of sympathy seem on the other hand less subject to increase; their perfection does not seem to depend on our own efforts. Mother de Ricci's heart was one out of a thousand. She literally embraced every one in her affections. In joy or sorrow she could rejoice or grieve. There was no event which did not elicit her interest: the Sisters' home affairs, convent matters, the children's progress, the working of the school: all and everything had a place there. She was a typical friend who would sacrifice self's dearest claims for others. She seemed to ignore self where a service had to be rendered or help administered. Many an outsider, reduced in circumstances, will recall with thankful appreciation the kindness and sincerity shown by her."

Every word of this holds good of Mother Emmanuel; and so does a saying of a gifted soul who was almost as much loved and revered on the banks of the Glanrye as on the banks of the Boyne. Mother Imelda Magee would have said of her as she said of Mother de Ricci: "She had a heart of gold". I rejoice to name these holy names, though they may seem to distract us from our story.

CHAPTER X.

LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE AND CONGRATULATION.

Mother Emmanuel's heart was large enough to embrace many concerns, to rejoice in many joys, and to mourn with many mourners. When anything specially good or bad happened to any of her friends, she did not leave her sympathy to be taken for granted. Thus, when the very tardy and inadequate recognition of John T. Gilbert's great labours in the sphere of Irish historical research took the form of a knighthood, making the "Rosa Mulholland" of a different department of literature Lady Gilbert, the Nun sent a letter of congratulation, which may be represented here by the answer which it received. The writer will forgive me for throwing this sidelight on the subject of my sketch. She writes from Villa Nova, 9 January, 1897 :—

"Your dear kind letter of congratulation is most welcome and prized, and we both thank you for your warm sympathy. I am glad, for John's sake, of the mark of recognition of his lifelong and self-denying work for the Country.

"You would be pleased to see the heaps of letters and telegrams we have got, congratulation and satisfaction expressed by persons of all classes and creeds.

"The thought of how pleased darling mother would have been, and my dearest Mrs. Atkinson, remains always in my mind. If this had happened a few years ago, I might have been too happy and too proud. God knows best. Nothing now seems to me real except dying well.

"Still I am very glad for John's sake, and he is pleased, though he too knows well how to estimate these things.

"We had a delightful visit from the Lord Chief Justice from

Saturday till Thursday. I was so glad that John and he came to know each other well."

Mother Emmanuel preserved also the letter which the same dear friend sent to her in reply to one of hers on a very different occasion; not a letter of congratulation but of condolence on the death of a mother. For such things are happening every day, and some one may find here comfort and inspiration. Again she will let me quote some of its pages, dated 28 November, 1896.

"I am very grateful for your dear letter. I knew you would feel deeply for us in this great sorrow which must inevitably come. Your words describing her as you first saw her are very precious to me. Such a smile as you remember was on her dear face as she lay before the Altar in the little chapel at Tadworth, only it had there a radiance beyond anything I ever saw on any living face. Age had passed away from her, and she looked like a young woman, and so beautiful.

"Her passing away was indeed sweet and peaceful, though she suffered. As we could not keep her longer without great suffering to her, I am rejoiced thinking of her, free and young and blissful with God, and with those loved ones she lost early —first of all my dear father. Though I cannot think she needs prayers, still I would beg them for her. You do not need to be asked, I know."

A year after the letter of congratulation that we have mentioned, she wrote to the same dear friend on 18 July, 1898, this letter of condolence.

"My dearest Rosa:

"Two months I have been *thinking* of you without writing a line. I knew your mind was too full of your own great trial to care for letters, and what good could I do you, telling you I was anxious about you and wondering how you were doing, day by day? I sometimes heard from Matthew and Mary Macauley how you were, so I kept my pen silent.

"Now, however, when our two Retreats are at hand, one after the other, I fancy if I did not write, the thought would be a distraction to me, especially as I could not write to you

then. So, dear Rosa, just to tell you over again how truly and deeply I grieved with you in your great loss, and how I prayed and do pray that God may enable you to pass through this gloomy part of this vale of tears, so that the bright country it leads to may be all the surer yours through your generous acceptance of the Cross you must carry, is all I have to say. Thank God, I hear you are trying all along to be brave, and I hope God will strengthen you to keep up.

"I had a letter from Mother Baptist, and she begged me to say how she felt for you and prayed for you and Sir John's soul, R.I.P. Another Reverend Mother, Mary Austin Carroll of Alabama, who only knows you (I think) through your writings, asked me to tell you how heartily sorry she was to hear of the death of Sir John, such a great Irishman, and that she and all her community offered Mass and a General Communion for his soul. R.I.P.

"I hope, dear Rosa, you are pretty well.

"Believe me your loving friend,

"Sr. M. Emmanuel."

Mother Catherine of the Presentation Convent, Youghal, who had once been Elizabeth Jennings of Newry, reached her Golden Jubilee as a nun in January, 1902. Mother Emmanuel sent her this letter of congratulation :—

"My dearest Mother M. Catherine :

"It is not granted to many to have fifty years of good service to offer up to our good God, and no wonder the Church allows such an anniversary to be solemnly kept, as she loves to do honour to the 'Faithful Servant'; and we in our poor small way try to enter into her spirit and send our earnest loving congratulations to you who have now attained the honour of Jubilarian. But *I* feel most the pleasure and honour of having that Jubilarian as one of my earliest and dearest friends, so I want you to know that my words come from the warmest of your old friends. I dare say, except dear Sister Margaret Mary, I am the only one in Newry who can claim that title. Do you remember the last visit you paid Margaret Gartlan in Mount Bailey?—that you took me with you in your

car with your dear Kate and Margaret, R.I.P. You told me of your going to the Convent then. Do you remember, too, my mother and myself going to Youghal to see *you* rather than to the Lakes of Killarney? But I must stop, as you have many letters to read. Our little offerings are not golden ones, but as each speaks of Newry, or old friends, they will be acceptable to you.

"Heartily joining in all the kind wishes for to-morrow,

"Ever your old affectionate friend,

"Sister M. Emmanuel."

I will here venture to interpolate a letter of consolation which does not belong to this chapter. The last pages of my little book, "Jesus is Waiting," try to give some idea of the beautiful character of Sister Mary Francis of Drumshambo, daughter of the first Lord O'Hagan. It is she who tries in the following letter to comfort a sister of the Community, High Park, Dublin, for the death of her sister, Margaret Stevelly.

"Adoremus in Aeternum SS. Sacramentum.

"23 *January*, 1902.

"My own loved Sister and darling Friend:

"As I knew dear Bob and Sue were with you during the past few days, I put off writing till they had left, but my heart has been with you day and night, and all my heart's deep sympathy. I cannot say how grateful I am to dear Sister St. John for her loving thought in writing to me. Her letter was the greatest comfort to me, telling me that our good God was true to His word and was supporting my darling Mary in His strong and loving arms. Thank dear Sister St. John with my fond and grateful love. But I know well, my poor darling, that the first days of sorrow are far from being the worst, and that now and for some time to come you will need all your courage to be true to your word, and not to shrink from the completion of the sacrifice which you made with all the generosity of your great and loving heart, and which I firmly believe gained many precious graces for our loved one, and the crowning grace of her sweet and beautiful death,

added of course to her own nearness and dearness to God; and oh! few were nearer or dearer, even while she was here. What must it be now? But the desolation and loneliness of heart will come to you inevitably with a longing cry that she might come back to you, and *then*, my darling, will be the moment to prove your generosity, your gratitude, and your love. And, when that time of struggle and anguish is past, you will get the reward of your sacrifice in a peace and joy and happiness in thinking of her and living in her joy such as you have never had during the long years since you left her for God. Won't you be brave and generous as you have been heretofore, and fight against the feeling of desolation as much as you possibly can? First, because giving way to it would be a disloyalty to your dear God, and a taking back what you gave and He accepted, and then because our darling would ask you for her dear sake not to grieve, but to let your tears be tears of joy and gratitude for the 'great things He has done in her'. And we must feel that He has done great things, first in the nature He gave her, and then in the perfecting of that nature by grace, and now in having crowned that nature in eternal glory. For in the beauty of her nature she stood almost alone. A more perfect nature God never gave to any of his children, nothing to desire different in her—the purest, highest and noblest in heart and soul and mind. I remember a short time before our dear Bess's death at Bournemouth, she and I were talking of our darling, and she put in words what I had always felt in my heart: she said, 'I think Mag's character more like that of our Lord than any one whom I have ever known.' *And it was so true.* My darling, I hope I do not pain you by writing like this, but it is as I would talk to you if I had you in my arms, and I long to comfort you as I used to try to do in so many sorrows during the long years of our love. And what I say to you I say to myself, for I too have a void in my heart which can never be filled till I see her again. But with you I tried to offer her to God, and I would not take her back though her place can never be filled for me. But, thank God, you are still left to me—you who have the same

high noble nature and are so like her in many ways. I shall not write more to-day, though I feel I could go on for ever talking of her and all she was and is. But before Lent, please God, I shall ask leave to write again. And now, my own loved sister, I will ask you not to try to write or dictate a letter. I know all you would say, and writing is more than trying to you. Darling Ady will tell me of you, and dear Sister St. John said she would send me a line soon: so I beg of you not to write till Easter. Then you will tell me you are really happy, as we both should be from the moment her dear pure soul flew to God, as pure and spotless, I firmly believe, as on the day of her baptism. God guard you in His loving arms, my own sweet Mary. Fond love to all my friends.

"Yours for ever,

"Sister M. F."

To Mother Emmanuel this ardent, beautiful soul sent her affectionate greetings on her last New Year's Day. She speaks of a visit that I had paid her in her holy Convent of Perpetual Adoration, alluding at the beginning to my sister's loss of sight.

"We talked a good deal about you, and he told me you were the same bright spirit as ever, as bright and cheerful as if you had no cross to carry, and yet to you it must be one of the hardest that could be given to you, but you have learned now to bear such at the Feet of your Crucified Master. We were delighted with Mother Baptist's Life, which was read in the Refectory. She did a noble work for God, and I know another Sister of Mercy who has done quite as noble a work, but whose life I hope may not be written for a good long time, as we want her in this poor selfish world to show what noble nature, perfected by grace, can do. One good result of your illness is that dear Fr. Matthew sees you often, and this is a great joy to him, for his love and esteem are very great, and now you two are the only ones left. I am so glad that you are to have a new chapel. It will be a beautiful memorial of dear Lord Russell, and the kind of memorial

you like best. I hope all your 'old people,' at the House had a very merry Christmas. I am sure it was not your fault if they had not.

"Dearest Mother Emmanuel, I know you do not forget me in your prayers. Ask that I may be faithful till death, and ask for me humility and love. I never forget your intentions in my night adoration. With fondest love and all earnest wishes that God's best gifts and blessings may be yours in full abundance during this year,

"Ever your loving friend and sister in J. C.

"Sister Mary Francis,
"*Professed O.S.F.*"

"*During this year.*" But Mother Mary Emmanuel was to spend only one more month of it on earth. How closely God keeps that great secret to Himself! Even in lingering illness death comes unexpectedly. Probably the following was the last of Mother Emmanuel's letters, for Death had laid his hand in blessing upon her forehead, and she knew it not. Within a few days of her own death she heard of the death of Mrs. John Denvir, the widow of a member of a family with whom her family had long been very intimate. With the good lady herself she had not had the opportunity of much intercourse; and altogether, with her lost eyesight and weak health, she might fairly have considered herself dispensed from what must have been for her the difficult task of writing. Yet the daughter of the deceased lady received the following letter of which the original, which lies before me, would, even as regards penmanship, be a good piece of writing for a young woman with health and sight unimpaired.

"Convent of Our Lady of Mercy,
"Newry, 2 *March*, 1902.

"My Dearest Minnie:

"We all here are extremely sorry about your dear Mother's death and feel so much for you left alone. Heartily do we sympathise with you in this great sorrow. So many years you two have lived together that it is no common loss to you. May God, who alone can, console and strengthen you to bear

this heavy cross! We heard from your brother how very bravely you are bearing up under it, thank God; and he too is very edifying. It is to him also a serious loss. Before you read this, you will have parted with all that is mortal of a loving Mother, and you will be very sad and lonely. We feel much for you, and we are glad you have your cousin in the house with you and your kind sister-in-law, Mrs. Denvir. You will try and take comfort, remembering your dear Mother's good life, and how God rewards the 'faithful servant,' and that soon she will be in the enjoyment of the bliss of Heaven. You will try unselfishly to forget *your* loss in her great gain. We all have prayed for her. I offered my morning's devotions and the Stations of the Cross for her dear soul.

"Reverend Mother unites in true sympathy and love; also all the Sisters who knew you. Believe me, dearest Minnie,

"Your affectionate friend in J. C.

"Sister Mary Emmanuel."

I will go back four years, to the date of Mother Baptist's death, 4 September, 1898, when she writes thus to Sister Mary Aquin, of San Francisco (the "Mary Martin" of Newry and Killowen).

"My Dearest Sister Mary Aquin:

"All is over now—death, funeral, and all—and you are quietly settled down to begin life without one who formed the bond of union between you all, the animating spirit. Well, thanks be to God, you all have *Him* now just as before, but the difference is you must go direct to Him in all doubts and anxieties, and He will be all the more to you because He has been pleased to withdraw your earthly support. If that loving soul could come back among you to assist and advise, would she not, seeing God as she sees Him now, tell you all to be brave and generous, have 'no rapine in the holocaust,' but work on, on, and that soon all will be re-united never to part and to be a Community in Heaven?

"Indeed, dear Sisters, you all have been very favoured by God that He left your first Mother so long among you. Show now how you have learned her spirit, and let each vie with

the other, who will be most cheerful and self-forgetting. I know you, dear Mary, will feel her loss deeply, associated as she was with a much older time to you than to any one in the Community, but you will try all the harder to be what *she* would wish.

" Your affectionate friend and Sister in J. C.

" Mary Emmanuel."

Writing at this time to Miss Rebecca Halligan, she said about Mother Baptist: " Seeing her lying helpless, speechless, and blind, the poor Sisters said they felt God allowed it, that they might be resigned to let her go to Him." But Mother Baptist was deprived of sight for ten days only before death. Her sister's trial was far harder and far longer.

CHAPTER XI.

TWO HAPPY DEATHS.

What more shall be told of this Irish Sister of Mercy, youngest sister of the first Catholic Chief Justice of England? She remained on earth after him as long as she had been before him at the beginning—nearly two years. He died without long warning on 10 August 1900. His death was preceded and accompanied by so many consoling circumstances that it could not be accounted a grief even to his sister's loving heart. Several edifying little incidents clustered round his last circuit as judge, which took him through Wales: an alms to a poor and lonely priest, Confession and Communion sought under difficulties, Mass served at Beaumaris as in the old boyish Killowen days. That was his last visit to Wales, and I will link it with his first. His first visit to Wales was to see me at St. Beuno's near St. Asaph, whither I had gone in the Autumn of 1863 for my theological studies in preparation for the priesthood. When Circuit brought the young barrister to Liverpool, he sacrificed his Sunday's rest to that troublesome pilgrimage. That he took care to hear Mass I chance to be able to certify from the questions he put to me about the celebrant, who was Father James McSwiney, a very learned but quaint little priest of London birth and intensely Irish heart. My brother told me that on that occasion, when he turned round to preach, Father McSwiney took the Missal from the altar and gave his own version of the Gospel (Matt. xxii. 15): *Consilium inierunt ut caperent eum*—"They put their heads together to catch him." The Douay version makes the Pharisees "consult among themselves how to ensnare him". But these are trivial recollections to obtrude upon us when we are kneeling beside a deathbed. More fitting it is to

recall as a good omen that the last public utterance of the judge who was now soon to be judged was a generous vindication of Welsh juries from serious charges that had been brought against them.

I can make room here for only two or three brief testimonies to the greatness of Lord Russell's life and the holiness of his death. The most recent and in many respects most satisfactory account of his career has been contributed to the new edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" by Sir William Rann Kennedy, Lord of Appeal. "As a Q.C., his success was prodigious. As a judge, he was dignified without pompousness, quick without being irritable, and masterful without tyranny. He was scrupulously punctual. In his contests at the bar he never made an enemy. He was a strong man, and he liked to have his way; but he was also large-hearted and without a tinge of rancour in his disposition. Probably no English lawyer ever excited abroad the admiration which was accorded to Lord Russell of Killowen, alike on the continent of Europe and in America."

In Parliament, towards the end of 1911, Mr. Asquith referred to the Parnell Commission and Sir Charles Russell. "During nine months, never to be forgotten in my professional life, I sat behind that great advocate—I think the greatest advocate of our time." Sir Andrew Marshall Porter, ex-Master of the Rolls in Ireland, will let me add a private to a public testimony. "I thank you for reminding me of our introduction through that great man, the late Lord Russell. I asked Sir Edward Clarke once how the new Judge was doing. His answer was: 'He is simply an *ideal* Chief Justice'." In the twelve years since his death the frequency with which he has been referred to in leading articles and books of reminiscences is extraordinary. For instance the "Westminster Gazette" of 12 November, 1909, says: "The Bench requires strengthening. We want more men of the type of the late Lord Russell, who, with a breath of strong common sense, could sweep away a flimsy and ridiculous plea." Mr. Manuel Bidwell ("Tablet," 5 April, 1902) puts him in good company: "It would be difficult to entertain such ideas [the old anti-

Catholic prejudices] with the memory of Newman and Faber, Hope Scott, and Lord Russell of Killowen still present to all." The Archbishop of Colombo, addressing the Catholic Union of Ceylon, went further afield for his parallels. He named the great Catholic laymen of many nations. It is well to repeat them. O'Connell and Ireland are mentioned, but that is ancient history. "While North America had her Brownson and South America her Garcia Moreno, England had Frederic Lucas and Lord Russell of Killowen." The Archbishop goes on to couple Italy with the name of Cesar Cantu, Spain with Balmes, Germany with Windhorst, and with France he joins Joseph de Maistre, Ozanam, Montalembert, Louis Veuillot, and Count de Mun. She needed and needs them all. Only such illustrious men as these does this unprejudiced Frenchman deem fit to be Charles Russell's peers.

So much for the influence of his life, to be crowned by a holy death. "I have no great clinging to life," he said; and he set about his special preparation for the great act of dying. Father Herbert Thurston, S.J., a valued friend of the family, was sent for, but he was not at home. The priest who came promptly in his stead wrote to a daughter of his penitent two weeks after all was over. "I only wish to say how greatly I was impressed and helped by the deep humility and simple manly faith to which your father's interview with me gave evidence. Though there was no necessity whatever for such repetition, he insisted on the exhausting task of making a complete review of his life, being quite convinced that the doctors could not save him and that nothing remained but to prepare for the end as well and as courageously as possible. Stranger though I was, I carried away and will always retain a feeling of affectionate reverence for your father's memory. 'May my last end be like his.'"

2 Cromwell Mansions, the last home of the Chief Justice, belongs to the parish administered by the Fathers of the Brompton Oratory founded by Father Faber. The Father to whom it fell to give the last rites of the Church to the dying man was Father Lionel Basevi, who wrote to me towards the end of that month. "Your brother received Extreme Unction

and the last blessing with great devotion and simplicity. As I was leaving the room, Lord Russell called me back and asked me to place my hand on his forehead and to bless him.[1] It was most edifying to see his simple and earnest faith."

A happy death is the happiest of all happy things, for it is followed at once by everlasting happiness. Though the second of these two happy deaths was still delayed nearly two years, there were already signs of its approach. In Lord Russell's last letters many anxious references to Mother Emmanuel's eyes occur. But I am astonished to find from the only trustworthy record how far back the trouble began. After all the trouble was over, Dr. Fitzgerald, the eminent oculist, was so good as to give me this minute account:—

"27 Upper Merrion Street,
"Dublin, 24 *April*, 1902.

"Dear Mr. Russell:

"In accordance with the wish expressed in your letter of the 18th inst., I shall endeavour to give a brief account of the history of your sister's case. She first consulted me on 3 May, 1899, and at that time the vision of her right eye was greatly impaired. This was due to repeated attacks of inflammation in it, which had first affected the eye in the year 1885. The disorder was a most painful one, and there can be no doubt that she must have suffered very intensely during these attacks. The treatment I then prescribed gradually gave her great relief, and the vision of the eye considerably improved. Unfortunately, about the middle of the following September,

[1] This little incident astonishes Mr. A. G. C. Liddell, C.B. ("Notes from the Life of an Ordinary Mortal"). He was also surprised at Lord Halsbury, the Lord Chancellor, showing so much feeling when speaking of Lord Russell's death and saying that he inspired love. The following was his own view: "To those who only knew him casually, he was a strong overbearing man, with the instincts of a despot. I do not think I ever met a man with such an eye. You had to screw yourself up to resist his glance, and I have seen him terrify a witness by one look. He was also one of the few advocates whom I have heard completely smash up a witness on cross-examination in such a way as virtually to win the case by that one act. He had some fine qualities, a thorough genuineness, and a force and individuality which is rare nowadays."

during my absence in America, a fresh and sudden attack of inflammation started in the right eye, and the sight again became most seriously impaired; and in November the left eye also became affected, and the sight considerably deteriorated. There can be no doubt she must have suffered very intensely during these attacks. On my return she visited me again on 12 December. A consultation was held with Mr. Swanzy, and it was decided that an operation should be performed upon both eyes, as it gave the only chance of securing her against further attacks, and retaining any vision in the left eye. The operations were subsequently performed, and on the whole were attended with fairly satisfactory results, though unfortunately the eyes still remained somewhat painful and irritable. As I have before stated, the character of the pain is extremely severe, and hard to tolerate; but I can truly say, that I have rarely, if ever, seen it borne more cheerfully and with greater fortitude than by your dear sister.

"Believe me,

"Yours sincerely,

"C. E. FITZGERALD."

If I had foreseen the writing of this book, I might have collected many interesting materials. But as a fact, I mark expressly on a letter dated 9 June, 1901, that that was the first letter I had kept with a view perhaps to a memorial of Mother Emmanuel hereafter. In that letter she quotes an old saying that is new to me: "'Tis far off what God can't send". This was apropos of fifty dollars from Miss Nora Murphy of San Francisco to commemorate Mother Baptist's Golden Jubilee and anniversary, chiefly by helping in her name the sick in Rostrevor and Killowen. She tells how, visiting the sick in Killowen, she made her way up the steep side of the mountain to the little holding of Kate and Bridget Brennan—"I went with dear Sister M. Vincent to visit them, to their great delight. What a lovely view there must be from their house! I could easily imagine it, as of course I could not see it." Not able to see the well-known Bay and Carlingford Mountain beyond! Not able to see Seafield

nestling amidst its trees, not more than four or five fields down below! It was indeed pathetic. Yet I am sure she was as bright and brave as ever.

She ended by saying: "Of course the 7th of June will find you in Newry"—namely the date fixed for the consecration of Dr. Henry O'Neill as Bishop of Dromore. Besides the veneration which was Mother Emmanuel's willing tribute to every priest, the new Bishop had well earned a very special share of her love and gratitude by the unwearying services of very many years during which Father Henry O'Neill had been, so to speak, their neighbour while filling the onerous post of President of St. Colman's College, Violet Hill. The kindness of the President and of his brother, Father Hugh O'Neill—whom God called away, as we say, prematurely, to the reward of a singularly unselfish and devoted priestly life—their kindness to the Sisters of Mercy was inexhaustible, especially in ministering at their altar, even when the whole length of the town was added to their early morning walk, as when they said Mass in the Home in Kilmorey Street.

"During the many long months that our loved Mother Emmanuel suffered so intensely from her eyes," the Sister Infirmarian writes to me, "I never heard her utter a single murmur or complaint; though I have often found her pressing her hands on her eyes and burying her face on her bed, unable to do anything but just to suffer, suffer! When attending her, if I forgot any little thing, I would never know it from *her*. Suffering so much herself, she was assiduous in her visits to the sick, attending to their comfort and cheering them up. Her last work before lying down to die was to finish some jerseys that her skilful fingers, without aid from her eyes, made out of wool bought by the last of many alms of one of her nephews who doubtless thought that he would have many another opportunity of gratifying her thus and pleasing God. She was anxious that these should be given to certain poor girls while the cold weather lasted."

I have described in an early chapter the regularity and quiet fervour of Sarah Russell's visits to the Blessed Sacrament in her girlhood. This continued to be her special de-

votion till the end. What vivid faith, what firm hope, what burning charity, what perfect sorrow for sin, what earnest petitions, what fervent thanksgiving and praise, must have filled the many minutes of each day that found her before the altar during the many years since that day when she said to her restless little brother in the Newry Cathedral, "Try and say another prayer till some one comes. I do not like to leave Him alone." Strange to say, we have a record of her very last visit to the Blessed Sacrament. This is Sister Laurentia's note :—

"On the evening of Tuesday, 4 March, the last evening our loved Mother was in Choir, she was kneeling upright in her stall. I thought she was speaking to some Sister ; it seemed to me a long and earnest conversation. She thought she was alone in Choir and was giving full vent to her devotion ; for, on looking up, I found there was no other Sister present. Our beloved Mother was speaking thus earnestly to Our Blessed Lord Himself."

Next morning Sister Laurentia said to her : "Mother, dear, you are not well." She answered : "No, dear. I have a little headache ; but, when I get a cup of tea, it will go away." She refused, however, to lie down, but managed to assist at Mass and receive Holy Communion, and then to make her way with difficulty to her place in the refectory. She then consented to return to her bed, without the slightest notion that she was never to rise from it. Nay, she at once regretted having capitulated so soon and begged to be allowed to rise in order to make the Stations of the Cross as usual ; for of late, if the Superior did not want her after breakfast to consult about the business matters of the day, it had been her custom at half-past nine o'clock to say the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary, walking in the corridor ; then, to make the Stations of the Cross, and afterwards a meditation with head bent down at the Sacred Heart Altar in the Oratory. This she did for the last time on the Tuesday of that week ; for on Wednesday she was not allowed to rise again for this purpose. She was nailed to the Cross herself. Her last stage had begun. In taking to her bed for the last time, she thanked

God for the relief it gave her, and she said to Sister Laurentia: "I always pitied poor servants who had to keep up even when really ill, and could not take a rest".

On Thursday she was restless and had still a chilly feeling. The doctor perceived that the case was serious and asked that the priest should be sent for. The poor patient thought that it was only a cold and that in a few days she would be herself again. Father Carlin shrank from pressing her to receive the Last Sacraments; but the Mother Superior said to her: "Father Carlin says, if you were a call in one of the back lanes of the town, he would finish you off". She replied: "Well, Father Carlin knows best". So, about ten o'clock that Thursday night, she was anointed and received Holy Viaticum.

The doctor visited his patient at half-past six on Friday morning and found her considerably improved. But after a few hours there was a change for the worse, and, when the doctor called in the afternoon, he found that pneumonia had set in, and he considered it necessary to have the advice of a second physician. After their consultation Mother Emmanuel asked Mother Superior to let her know their opinion, and she received her sentence quite cheerfully.

During that sad day three telegrams had come to me, increasing in hopelessness, and my Superior bade me hasten to my sister's bedside, which I reached about 11 p.m. I found the two doctors together at the Convent, announcing that there was no longer any hope. The dying Nun was quite bright and calm and able to talk to me. I remember saying that I would join her soon. "Sixty-eight, you know!" "But you are not that age yet." This was in reference to a coincidence that I had pointed out to her, that my three chief friends, Doctor Russell of Maynooth, Judge O'Hagan, and my brother, had been born respectively in 1812, 1822, and 1832, and had died in the same order after the same intervals in 1880, 1890, and 1900. This circumstance made me notice in books and newspapers the extraordinary frequency of 68 among the dates of death. As if nature stopped a little short of the scriptural three score and ten, just as septennial Parliaments never run the full term of seven years.

I was allowed to remain within reach till the end; and even then, within a few hours of death, Mother Emmanuel's anxiety was about my comfort. I remember still with edification the cheery tone with which she exclaimed, "Oh, that's lovely!" when a Sister settled her afresh on her pillow. She begged the Mother Superior to send the Sisters to their beds. "I shan't die to-night, and I don't like the Sisters to lose their night's rest."

God treated her gently at the last. Her triduum of not very painful sickness began on Wednesday, St. Joseph's day of the week, in the month of that Patron of Happy Deaths, and ended on Saturday, the Blessed Virgin's day; and it did not rob her of even one of her daily Communions. She had communicated, probably with great difficulty, in the Convent Chapel on Wednesday. Father Carlin gave her Holy Viaticum on Thursday evening, and the Bishop again on Friday. Saturday morning she received her Last Communion from her brother's hand into a heart as pure as that with which she had received First Communion long ago from the venerable hand of Michael Blake, the snowy-headed Bishop of our childhood.

To show how conscious she was and how like herself to the very last, it will not be amiss to mention that, when I turned to administer her last Communion, so near to her last breath, she cried *Confiteor;* for the Superior, Mother Magdalen Burke, had spoken so low through her tears that the sounds had not reached the ears of the dying one, and she wished the supposed omission to be supplied.

A little before the end she closed her eyes and her mouth, and never opened them again. And so, with Father Carlin and her brother and all her Sisters praying round her, she died with perfect calmness about half-past ten o'clock in the forenoon of Saturday, 8 March, 1902, which was her seventy-first birthday. It was surely her happy birthday also into the true life of Heaven.

CHAPTER XII.

THE JUDGMENT OF TWO GREAT JUDGES ON A THIRD.

As in the preceding chapter I introduced the account of Mother Emmanuel's death by referring back to her brother's death two years before, so I will venture to preserve here two of the tributes called forth by Lord Russell's death before closing this sketch with some of the testimonies borne to the usefulness and beauty of his sister's life when it had come to an end.

Sir James Mathew and Sir Richard Henn Collins were two Irishmen, a Catholic and a Protestant, who had this in common with Lord Russell of Killowen that, without any help except their own great qualities, they won the highest distinction at the English Bar. Sir James Mathew was a nephew of Father Theobald Mathew, the Apostle of Temperance; and he was Mr. John Dillon's father-in-law. These two great lawyers are paired together now, because they took the first opportunity that presented itself after the death of their colleague and friend to give public expression to their admiration for him. This opportunity was afforded by the October meeting of the Irish Literary Society of London. No doubt a brief note of the proceedings was the most that appeared next day in the newspapers. But fortunately the Committee of the Society secured a verbatim report which was submitted to the two distinguished speakers for correction. Typewritten copies of this report were sent to the relatives of Lord Russell. I am glad to put it into print for the first time.

Sir James Mathew spoke of the practical aid that "the great man they had lost" had always given to that and all kindred associations.

"He took the deepest interest in any movement that tended to keep alive that love of literature which, in good and evil times, has been the characteristic of our race. He has not had the credit given him among his many great endowments for one conspicuous gift that he possessed. He was, as we know, a great orator; but he had also great literary ability, he was an admirable writer, and if time had been given him from other pressing avocations, and he had been able to turn his great intellect to the cultivation of literature, I am sure he would have held a high place among the writers of his time.

"Beneath his great intellectual gifts there was what few suspected—an extraordinary fund of enthusiasm. It seems incongruous that a lawyer should have any sensibility of any sort; but here was a lawyer with a commanding intellect, a resolute will, a capacity of understanding men and things such as few others have possessed. How is it possible that he should have any enthusiasm in his nature? That enthusiasm existed, and carried him often somewhat further than his friends approved, but everybody forgave him for his obvious honesty and sincerity of purpose. What was the explanation? Well, he always boasted that he was a Celt, and anybody who knew him intimately would not hesitate to accord to him that distinguished title. That quick intellect was accompanied by equal quickness of feeling. He had all the sensibility, all the consideration for others, all the inability to believe that a cause was lost because it was defeated, which are said to be the characteristics of the Celtic strain.

"It was not wonderful under such circumstances that the history of his own country had a fascination for him that he could not resist. He passed easily from this uncomfortable present into that wonderland of past time, the history of his country during the last century and the century that is now coming to a close.[1] His mind was filled with the achievements of the great men of the past, and he passed into their

[1] This expression shows that, on a hotly disputed point, Sir James Mathew considered 1900 the last year of the nineteenth century, not the first of the twentieth.

society as readily as he did into ours. His mind was with all the great thoughts of Burke, Grattan, Curran in his most bitter moods, Sheil and O'Connell. They were the champions of Ireland in his estimation: I think he regarded them with greater devotion than we are in the habit of regarding the champions of Christendom. In addition to that he had his mind stored with the sorrowful poetry of our country, above all with the plaintive lyrics of that time which none but the old can now remember, the time of Young Ireland; and it was his delight, if you let him, to go on reciting these old songs, as a skilled musician tries an old melody and will sing it time after time.

"Such is the man we have lost, a man of great intellect and of great feeling.

"He was a man that England is willing to claim as one of her own people. Well, unquestionably he served England with all his ability, and they may call him, if they like, a great Englishman; but he was what I think I may in a whisper say here—he was what is far better, a great Irishman."

Sir James Mathew was followed by another Irishman who had raised himself to the highest position in his profession in England. After some introductory words, Sir Richard Henn Collins, Lord Justice of Appeal, went on:—

"I have not come here to deliver a studied speech or to pronounce a eulogium upon the great man whose loss we now deplore. In the few words that I am about to speak to you I desire to speak of him as I knew him, as a man and as a friend. This is not the place or the occasion to attempt an appreciation of his unique position as a great advocate and as a great judge. I prefer to speak of him as my old and intimate friend—a friend with whom I have been closely associated, not actually from the beginning, but from the early stages of his career, down to that final act which Mr. Justice Mathew has referred to,[1] an act which will perhaps

[1] The emphasis of Mr. Justice Mathew's reference will astonish those who have completely forgotten the transaction. He spoke of it as "that great Arbitration which, as I believe, saved England from the horrors of

remain hereafter as conspicuous as anything in his career, namely, the Venezuelan Arbitration.

"I first made his acquaintance more than thirty years ago, when I joined the Northern Circuit. He was at that time a junior of some ten years' standing, but already one of the most conspicuous men upon that great circuit. There was something about him which marked him out then and always as a man for whom all who knew him claimed the highest possible success in his career. It would be impossible to analyse the secret of his power; but no one who was brought into personal and close relations with him could go away without feeling that he had been in the presence of a great personality.

"He was a man of all those that I have ever met the freest from anything like insincerity. What he felt he said, and what he said he felt. When he had achieved a position almost unprecedented on the great circuit to which he belonged—when at intervals few and short he stole a few minutes from his continuous strain of work, you would see him in the Library talking to the least considered member of the circuit with as much freedom, familiarity, and friendly chaff as he would to the most distinguished of his compeers. He was absolutely without any shadow of assured self-importance. His real power enabled him to dispense (they were foreign to his nature) with those artifices of lesser men.

"Personally I owe to him a great debt. I came on the circuit having no friends and no connexion. He at once took me by the hand, he recognized in me a countryman, and that was enough. And, though we differed as far as it was possible to differ upon political questions, I can honestly say that those differences, though neither of us denied them or ignored them, never made the slightest change in our relations to each other. He was a man of broad mind, who could see things from his opponent's point of view as well

a war, which would have been little short of a Civil War with the United States. That great trial will stand out, I believe, in future times as the most significant incident of Her Majesty's reign."

as from his own, and he was absolutely frank and generous in his sympathies with their position.

"I have said I owe to him a great debt. I came without a friend and without a connexion, but I had, as time went on, the friendly counsel, the kind encouragement, the magnificent example of Charles Russell; and to those whose fortune it was to serve with him it was a splendid opportunity and a splendid discipline. He expected from his juniors the best that was in them, and he was satisfied with nothing less. The result was that they learned how to give it; and none more generous than he to recognize that he had got what he expected and what he sought.

"Well, I was his co-circuiter for something like twenty years. I saw him right through the strenuous period of his existence, when that vehement activity, that indefatigable energy, carried him to the front beyond all competitors. I watched, an interested spectator, the whole of his career, down to that final act in which I was associated with him, in the Venezuelan Award. I do not believe that the public have ever sufficiently realized the great debt that they owe to Lord Russell of Killowen for the influence which he exercised in bringing about the happy result of that Award. I do not believe that there was any other man in this kingdom who was capable of bringing a weight, a gravity, an indisputable supremacy in discussion and in argument such as he brought to bear upon the solution of that question; and I believe the public have scarcely yet appreciated the debt that is due to him. But of this I am certain, that they have no notion whatever at what cost it was won. I was present with him during those four sultry months in Paris, and during that time he was struck by the disease to which he ultimately succumbed. He was taken seriously ill with the very same symptoms that afterwards led to that final catastrophe which we are now deploring; but in ill-health, with shattered strength, he stuck to his post, and during those four weary months, with the thermometer at 98°, and the long and dreary speeches, endless, lasting not days, but weeks, nay even months, he sat, and his attention never flagged.

"To those of us who knew him in his earlier and strenuous days there was one thing which was positively heroic; he never was betrayed during all those four months, with all that prolixity of speech and interminability of discussion, into a hasty word. He brought the whole power of his magnificent intelligence to bear upon it, and he showed an exemplary patience and serenity under the trying ordeal. This was the work of a man who had already, as I now believe, received his death-wound.

"Yes, we knew him in his earlier days, through his career so strenuous and so rapid which necessarily led to the pushing aside of other men in order that he might get to the front. It was inevitable in a man of his commanding personality, but it was there. Others had to give way when he went to the front, and I do not think that we realized fully that there was always in the man that touch of nature, that softness, that capacity of sympathy which was certainly brought out in the highest degree when we saw him in the twilight of his career in Paris. I cannot tell; it may be that he himself had some premonition that his career was nearing its close; but, speaking of him as an old intimate and an old friend, I never realized myself, until I was brought into such close relations with him in Paris, the softness and the tenderness of his nature. There was to me something really pathetic to see this great man, whose personality fills not only the admiration of a single country, but one may say of the world, stooping and talking to a little child with the greatest possible sympathy and interest, making arrangements for her pleasure, and putting himself out of his way to distract and amuse her.

"It is a great pleasure to me, having been associated with him as I was right through that ardent and strenuous career, impressed as I was with his indefatigable energy and his exuberant vitality and his force, to treasure as my last recollection of him that mellowness, that softness, which transfigured and illumined the decline of his career.

"It is difficult for me now, impressed as I was with him as the type of vigorous vitality, to realize that that exuberant energy, that vehement activity, has ceased to exist. There

in the quiet Surrey Churchyard he lies at rest. 'After life's fitful fever he sleeps well,' but he has left behind him a memory that will not soon depart. He has left a reputation as probably the most conspicuous forensic figure that has lived within the reign of the great Queen Victoria. We are too near the open grave now to attempt to appreciate his relation to the great roll of distinguished advocates and distinguished judges who had filled the place that he filled. But of this I am quite sure, and in this I am certain the verdict of history will concur, that he was the most conspicuous forensic personality in the reign of the Queen.

"But we have not only that memory of him; there is something also for us, Irishmen, to treasure in our recollection. His was a great career; it was won without advantage of personal interest or of family relations. He came, an Irishman, proud of his nationality, proud of his typical Irish sympathies, proud of the creed of the majority of the nationality which he always asserted; and for him a noble career was opened, and his success was hailed with not less enthusiasm by Englishmen than by Irishmen. He has left to us all an example of what may be done within the ambit of the constitution of this great Empire—what may be done within the legitimate sphere of constitutional liberty in this United Kingdom. He has left to us an example of what may be done by an Irishman unaided by anything but his own ability, his own determination, and his own industry, and he has left a proof that for every Irishman who trusts himself and fears nothing and is not afraid to avow his nationality, there is open a career leading to the highest position in the realm."

. . . . . .

It is strange that Mr. Barry O'Brien, who listened to this beautiful tribute of Lord Collins, was able in his biography of Lord Russell to confine his quotation therefrom to a dozen lines. A more generous use of it would have partly supplied a want in his own work, revealing some part of the private and social character of the Lord Chief Justice. As such I rejoice to put the shorthand notes into print in full, and to

repeat this feeling tribute to a new and, I hope, a wider audience.

Both of these great lawyers, whose generous eulogy of another Irishman I am glad to preserve, have passed out of this life. Sir James Mathew died 8 November, 1909, aged 79; Lord Collins died in January 1911, aged 69.

What solemn mysteries are Life and Death, and what tremendous pathos and interest in the succession of men, generation after generation! There are young hearts thrilled this moment with the same ambitions and enthusiasms that were once felt by these three Irishmen whom I have linked together. And so this wonderful world of men and women and children, of beasts and birds and trees and flowers and yellow harvests, goes on and on and on, no matter who goes off the stage, as these three gifted Irishmen have done.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

Some of the opinions expressed about certain points in Mother Emmanuel's character and conduct have been cited incidentally in the preceding pages; but I now set myself formally to the task of weaving together the estimates of various persons, especially her Sisters in religion. As some of these may object to be named or known, I will mix up and mingle together their expressions of feeling and regard with some such confusion and this for some such purpose as in the travesty of Rev. George Crabbe in "Rejected Addresses," where the line of handkerchiefs formed to recover the hat that had fallen from the gallery in the theatre was "purposely so crossed in texture and materials as to mislead the reader in respect to the real owner of any one of them".

I will begin with a good lay-sister. "It is sweet to think of her, just as a meditation—everything in her was so perfect. It would take one to live with her in order to be able to know her right. She was so gentle, kind, and charitable to every one, and so bright and light-hearted, it was a pleasure to see her laugh. And then she had such respect for every person, poor and rich, especially for priests—she would make one feel that they were God's angels on earth. For all the Nuns' friends she had the greatest respect, and no matter how busy she would be she had always time to help and console, and her words had great power: one could not help but feel they came from God and for His glory. Never could any one go to her at a wrong time; she was ever ready to help. She was a real, real Mother. She had a heart for every one."

"It was a pleasure to *see* her laugh." This reminds me of what is said of St. John Berchmans: "His laugh was rather

seen than heard". But I hope that, like hers, it was hearty though not noisy, and both mirthful and mirth-encouraging. A more constantly and more evenly cheerful disposition and demeanour than Mother Emmanuel's could not be.

The Bishop of Cork, Dr. T. A. O'Callaghan, Prior of the Dominican Order in Newry for many years, during which he had been often the Confessor of the Convent and had conducted their annual retreat four times, said of Mother Emmanuel: "I esteem her as a perfect religious; and I have reason to believe that she helped me a great deal by her prayers". Father Carlin wrote: "I knew her intimately for twenty-three years, and I think she was never guilty of a wilful fault".

Three friends from outside begin a sentence with the same phrase, "Her great characteristic was ——" but one of them goes on "her wonderful sympathy with every one's troubles"; another "her wonderful interest in all things old and new"; and the third "her calmness, evenness, brightness". The second of these, which emphasizes the keenness of her interest in many things, may be illustrated by this fact. When Brigid O'Flaherty from the Arran Islands was asked who was the best of her pupils in Irish, she replied: "Mother Emmanuel, if she had her eyes".

A Dundalk Sister of Mercy wrote:—

"There could not, I think, be a more perfect nun than dear Mother Emmanuel, nor one more lovable. She always impressed us all here as having her heart and thoughts in Heaven, and still so full of the tenderest love and charity for all her earthly friends below."

A young man of the world, whose sister was one of her novices, wrote: "Her name is a link in my life that binds me to all that is noble, lofty, and holy". And that same novice often said to her mother: "Oh, Mamma, if you could only get a glimpse of Mother Emmanuel's face after receiving Holy Communion, you would see a heavenly light upon it that cannot be described". The Mother herself wrote: "To be in her presence was to be lifted above this earth altogether—cares and anxieties were for the time forgotten, she made you so happy".

One who has filled many beautiful pages of this book wrote when she heard of her dear friend's dangerous illness :—

"I have been praying for you ever since your sad news reached me last night. I know that this is the very hardest earthly trial that could befall you. Next to you, I pity the poor nuns, who, young and old, will feel like orphans if God takes the one who was so long their head and Mother and Saint. If the dear angel is still conscious, will you whisper her my love, and ask her prayers for me and mine when she sees the Face of God in Heaven?" And then, when all was over, she prayed that God would comfort me "by always keeping me in spiritual communication with my beloved Saint who must be so near to His Sacred Heart! Sarah's first day in Heaven—think what it must be. For her no *De Profundis*, only Alleluia!"

I have often applied to her certain portions of Mrs. Browning's "My Kate" and of James Russell Lowell's "My Love". For instance, these lines of the American poet :—

> Feeling or thought that was not true
> Ne'er made less beautiful the blue
> Unclouded heaven of her eyes.

And then the Englishwoman :—

> 'Twas her thinking of others made *you* think of her.

To Mother Emmanuel might well be applied a phrase of Father Coleridge's which Cardinal Newman in a private letter called "very happy". Her "bright, fresh, joyous, and affectionate nature was like an ever-flowing spring, always at play, always shedding a gentle, imperceptible, and recreating dew upon all those who came within its reach".[1] Sister Mary Regis uses a simpler comparison. "There was sunshine wherever she was. When absent, her letters would keep us up till her return."

A Dominican Father wrote : "Mother Emmanuel was a woman of great faith, great confidence in God and His providence. She was calm and sweet in disposition, broad-minded and far-seeing. She was full of intelligence, yet most

[1] "The Month," February, 1903.

eager to learn. She was bright and humorous in recreation, yet never seemed to lose sight of God's presence."

K. B. of Killowen writes: "I feel more nor words can tell, for she was as true a heart as ever beat". Except that curious idiom, *nor* for *than*, what excellent English! And many have felt what one has said: "Death is not now so hard to look forward to, since *she* has passed through it".

More than two months after Mother Emmanuel's death one of the younger nuns, the first that Killowen gave to Religion, wrote from Rostrevor Convent:—

"We are getting used very slowly and sadly to our loved and saintly Mother being so long away from us. Every thing about this little Convent keeps her constantly before our eyes. How she used to enjoy her little visits here, and the good and the pleasure and the joy they gave us! She was the kindest and the best friend I ever had. I told her everything, and she always had time to listen to me and make everything so sweet and lovely."

"What a huge treasure of merit Mother Emmanuel has brought with her!" wrote Father Robert Kane, S.J. "It seems to me that her kind way of doing kind things will have made her gifts incomparably more precious to the kind Master than ordinary Christians can dream of."

In consoling two sisters two or three months before her death she used words that were exactly applicable in her own case: "My dearest B. and M. (she wrote), last evening Father Matthew gave us your sad news, and I hasten to offer my deepest sympathy in the loss of your dear warm-hearted mother. May her sweet soul rest in peace. You both have indeed a hard cross to carry; all the heavier for being so unexpected, yet even in that God showed her His great special love and that He found her ready and not needing longer preparation. He gave her full time for the great aids of the Church. Short as the notice of death was, all was done and her death 'bright and happy,' as Father Matthew says, thanks be to God. Console yourselves with the thought that your great loss is her gain, and that she is, or will be soon, in the possession of God's great rewards to the good and

faithful servant. We all have prayed for her and will do so often. Pray and do not grieve too much. It honours God when in suffering we say from our hearts 'Thy Will be done'. Try and say it often, for nothing calms us so much as resignation to the Will of God. With much sympathy to you both and to your brothers."

One who is serving God as a Religious of the Sacré Coeur mentions how she was tempted to become a Sister of Mercy in order to be under Mother Emmanuel's care; and I remember a daughter of Blessed John Eudes who told me that, when she had made up her mind, she refrained from visiting her native town in order not to come within the influence of Mother Emmanuel, who exercised a powerful attraction over her. Candour obliges me to add that this good Religious is now so firmly fixed in her beautiful Good Shepherd vocation that she refuses to believe that she could ever have believed it possible for her to waver. My attitude in the matter resembles that of the editor of a country newspaper in England, which, in its report of the Visitation Charge of an Anglican Bishop, had represented him as saying that he would not hold another visitation in that damned old church till it had been properly repaired and heated. The Bishop wrote to say that his phrase was "damp old church". "We publish his Lordship's letter with pleasure, but we have full confidence in our own reporter."

Here is a letter from the son of Mother Emmanuel's most generous benefactor, Mr. Thomas Fegan of Newry, the founder of the Home in Kilmorey Street and the untiring helper in all charitable works. To many of the priests of Ireland Father Henry Fegan, S.J., needs no such introduction, but is greeted cordially for his own sake. Thus he wrote from Clongowes, 9 March, 1902, without any thought of the use to which I am now putting his letter.

"If it were not that I know how much you were to one another, I think I should hardly say a word about sympathy in your trouble. She was the best of the whole of you. Not one of you came within miles of her. I never met her like. She struck me in all I ever had to do with her—and once

or twice I had serious, anxious business with her—as the strongest, simplest woman I ever met. She had so much sense, she saw so far into a thing and into its effects, that she was as a rule more 'conceding' than ordinary clever people. She had a kind, good heart. God rest her well."

The climax of these high appreciations, the last stone to be heaped upon this cairn raised to Mother Emmanuel's memory, may fitly be this sentence from the letter of her Bishop which has been placed in front of this sketch of her life as its best preface and justification. "She was one in whose character the most amiable human qualities were blended with all the virtues that become a perfect religious."

These testimonies which have been given in the very words of the witnesses, and still more the unconventional narrative that preceded them, are, I trust, enough to make some at least of the readers of this book to desire very earnestly a share in the amiable virtues and especially in the eucharistic spirit of this youngest and last of the three Sisters of Lord Russell of Killowen.

APPENDIX.

[My first sermon as a priest and my last special sermon were both concerned about places and persons mentioned in this book. They may be joined to it as supplementary chapters.]

THE SISTERS OF MERCY AT ROSTREVOR.

THERE is a saying of our Blessed Lord, not contained in any of the Four Gospels, but preserved for us by St. Paul. Nor indeed is it even quoted by St. Paul in any of his wonderful Epistles, but it only fell from his lips among the parting words which he addressed to the people of Ephesus and which the Holy Ghost inspired St. Luke to report in the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The great Apostle there bids his Ephesian converts "remember the word of the Lord, how He said: It is a more blessed thing to give rather than to receive".

These were St. Paul's parting words when setting out on his last journey to Jerusalem, and thence to Rome and death. And St. Luke goes on to tell us that the Christians fell on their Father's neck and embraced him, and there was much weeping amongst them all, and they grieved greatly at that word he had said that never should they look upon his face again; and thus in sadness they went down with him to the ship that was to bear him away. Might not this touching scene remind us of another scene too frequent for many years past at our seaports, where the friends wish to see the last of their friend who is going to begin life again on the other side of the Atlantic? And so they "go down with him to the ship," and the men try to cheer and to speak bravely, and the women try not to sob too loudly, and both fail; and the guardian angel of the emigrant, if angel could be sad, would be sadder than any of them, for his poor ward's chances of salvation are hardly improved by his change of home. But when the faithful of Ephesus had seen the Saint sail from the harbour of Miletus and were returning, they dwelt on all that he had so often told them, repeating to one another those last words: "Remember that saying of the Lord Jesus: It is a blessed thing to give rather than to receive".

A singular honour for these simple words which the Apostle of the Gentiles thus left as his last legacy to the Ephesians, and which, with our divine Lord who spoke them first, he repeats to us to-day: "It is a blessed thing to give". Yes, it is indeed a blessed thing to give—to imitate the Giver of all good gifts, to be the repre-

sentatives of God, the ministers and deputies of His bounteous Providence towards many around us—to enjoy the luxury, the exquisite luxury of doing good, of being good; the delicious sensation of having done a generous and holy deed for generous and holy motives—thus to keep our own hearts safe against all the approaches of hardness and avarice, whilst we make it better for some of our fellow-creatures that we have lived—to look on the faces of those who have received mercy and kindness from us and to read our thanks in their eyes, or rather, while refusing to exact our tribute by looking at them, to be conscious that gratitude is shining there, and that their hearts are blessing us and beseeching God to bless us. God cannot resist that prayer; before it reaches His throne, it is granted, and Jesus—He who will be our Judge but now is only our Saviour and our Brother—He rejoices to pronounce our sentence by anticipation: "Come, ye blessed of My Father!—thrice blessed in this that ye have been mindful of that word of My mouth, 'It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive'".

You are mindful of that saying so divinely beautiful, or at least you are filled with its spirit; and you are here to-day to exercise, for your soul's profit, and for God's glory in many ways, this blessed, this consoling duty and privilege of almsgiving. And surely if it be a blessed thing to give, it is plain that the blessedness of giving increases with the richness of the gift and the generosity wherewith it is given.

What is your gift? You give to God and to His Church, and to some chosen souls within her inner courts and to many souls without—to the poor, the ignorant, the sinful, the sick, the dying,—above all to little children—you help to give all these in different degrees all that is comprised in these words, the Sisters of Mercy at Rostrevor. For to-day is completed the establishment of a Convent which, nestling under the sacred shadow of this Church, shall be, please God, for centuries the holy and happy home in which race after race of this devout and charitable sisterhood may by the good work of prayer and the prayer of good works sanctify their souls for the Home Eternal.

One soul has gone home from hence to that eternal home already. The road between the two homes has been traversed once already. Already, but a few days since, it has seen one virgin soul pass home to Heaven, in the fresh purity and fervour of her youth. At least it was here in this infant convent that, a few weeks ago, I saw the holy Sister Winifride by whose new-made grave I knelt yesterday. And when they tell us, the watchers by her death-bed, how this

spouse of the Lamb, so young, had years before vowed her whole heart to God for life and then had received from death so long a warning used so well and needed so little, and when they tell us how at the end, as she said some moments before the end came, she felt, "not tired yet ready to rest," words to which God gave a deeper meaning than she meant; and so at the end "not tired but ready to rest" (may she rest in peace!), gay to the last and gentle, she sank to sleep, with a happy smile upon her face, and upon her innocent lips a strong cry of contrite hope and love—"O God, have mercy on my soul!"—when they tell us of so sweet a parting, what cry can spring to our lips but "Thanks be to God, *O Deo gratias!*"—the same cry which sealed the dying lips of another whom you knew, the first Sister of Mercy in Newry, and the first who was taken up to the Heart of Jesus in Heaven from the Convent hallowed by that name.[1]

Thanks be to God! Yes, let us give thanks to God for her. Let us rejoice with her in her joy, however we may mourn with those she has left behind in mourning.

He mourns, the father whose former sacrifice in yielding up his beloved child to God's stricter service was greater almost than hers, and whose new sacrifice, now that God has claimed her for a yet closer union, is all his own, while her portion is but to love him and to pray for him.[2] She prays. Even the holy departed souls can pray for others, though they themselves for a time are still in suffering, and in the need of prayers. But did not she suffer much, and with saintly thankfulness, in so lingering and so premature a death? And what had she to expiate by suffering? And are not all her sufferings over, and is it not from amongst the white-robed band of virgins who "follow the Lamb wheresoever He goeth" that even now she "sings the new song" and prays for us?

She prays to that Father, of whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named, that He may comfort her poor father as He only can, strengthening him with His grace to murmur meekly—"Our Father who art in heaven, Thy will be done." For him she prays, and for the mother to whose maternal heart the Son of the Mother of Sorrows, Himself the Man of Sorrows yet the God of all

[1] Mother Mary Catherine O'Connor, who was the first Superior of the Sisters of Mercy in Newry. She came from the Convent of Kinsale with a novice who was returning as a nun to her native town—Sister Mary Aquin, of whom something is told in earlier pages of the present volume.

[2] Mr. Joseph Lupton is dead many years, though he long survived his daughter. He is remembered among his fellow-townsmen for his staunch Catholic spirit and (is it bathos to add?) his exquisite skill in music.

consolation, addresses that word of consolation, "Weep not, the maiden is not dead but sleepeth"—yea, rather the maiden has waked up from sleep, and it is well with her. She prays for all the dear friends also who loved her and whom she loved. "Loved," do I say? Who love her and whom she loves; for all true love is from God and in God, with Whom she is. And, praying for friends and kinsfolk, she prays for these, her sisters in religion, bound to her by ties less earthly though scarce more sacred. Her prayer for them is that they may, through their longer term of exile, serve God faithfully in that vocation which she held and holds so dear, and in the various duties with which that vocation would have entrusted her if God had not hastened to shorten her exile and call her home.

What are those duties? What is that vocation? Who are these Sisters of Mercy? First, they are Christian Virgins who, drawing aside and banding together, devote their lives to the observance of the evangelical counsels of perfection under the consecration of the holy Vows. This much they are in common with all religious societies. If they were no more, if they did nothing but prepare themselves for the immortal life of Heaven by a mortal life of prayer, detachment, purity, retirement, and self-sacrifice, it would be enough. Nor could it be said that such an existence, however calm and happy for the few whom God's special graces might have called thereto and fitted for it, was selfish or slothful or cowardly in its very security. In the first place the only clear, unconditional duty of each of us is to save his own soul—to come before the tribunal of Jesus Christ with his soul free from sin and rich in the merits of a good life. All we have to do is to save our own souls, though for nearly everyone this duty involves multiplied relations with many other souls. But we are for God, not for any of God's creatures, no matter how close to us or how dear. We are for God; and a life like this, led by a weak child of Eve amidst the temptations and vanities of this fallen earth, is, indeed, something done for God, a compliment as it were and a glory for God, a compensation for outraged love and for violated rights, a living life-long act of contrition, of hope, of charity, a profession of faith in God's eternal truths, a tribute to the majesty of God's beauty and God's power, the supreme triumph and trophy of His grace.

For it is all the work of God's omnipotent grace. No fear that any soul worthy of so sublime a vocation could therefrom be tempted to a miserable, blasphemous pride. Such a one cannot forget that He by whose grace she is what she is, says to her, as

He said to them of old, "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you". She cannot forget that to whom much has been given, from her shall be required much; that not the vocation, but courage and fidelity in obeying the vocation and in acting up to the vocation, decide the eternal rank; that "many from the east and from the west shall sit down in the kingdom of Heaven while the children of the kingdom shall be cast out,"[1] and that all the generations of the true believers in Jesus Christ shall call His Mother herself "Blessed," fulfilling her own prophecy, not so much because that of her womb was born and at her breast was fed the Redeemer of mankind, as because she heard the word of God and kept it, and by her lowliness found favour in His sight. She cannot forget all this, nor can she forget that not to the first beginnings only of the Christian Church do those words apply, but to all the works of grace in all time, "The weak things of this world hath God chosen to confound the strong, and the things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are." Herein lies God's glory—that His highest instruments are nothing, and that He Himself is all, and with their nothingness worketh all.

But God's glory is our good. Our love for God contains in it a true, sincere, enlightened love of self, and this love of self is not true or sincere or enlightened unless it urge us to use the means which, according to our dispositions and circumstances, may best secure our only happiness, our only interest, our only end and aim, our only good. If this be selfishness, it is such selfishness as our Lord enjoins on us when He asks with terrible emphasis: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" We must save our own souls. The religious is resolved on saving her own soul.

And yet again even the purely contemplative religious is not cut off by her holy seclusion from all opportunities of helping on her fellow-pilgrims towards Heaven. She lives. Her life by itself alone is a reproach and an appeal; a meek but vehement reproach to the dastardly self-indulgence of the sinner; an appeal against the tyranny which the joys and sorrows, the duties and pleasures, of this brief hour of life exercise over the minds and hearts of men. The bodily and social wants are not our only concerns on this earth, and the concerns of this earth themselves are not our only concerns. Even here, "not by bread alone doth man live," and the heart that loves its God purely, apart, in silence and in secret, may do a truer service to mankind than the arm that wields hammer and battleaxe, or even the lips that speak words of truth

[1] Matt. VIII. 11.

and comfort to the doubtful and the sorrowing, or the hand that places bread in the wasted fingers of hunger, and smooths the pillow of the sick.

Yes, the world must go on, and money must be earned, and the sturdy fight of life must be maintained, and commerce and politics and science and, alas! war and many worse miseries must go on to the end, which end shall come whenever God pleases. Yet, still, "one thing only is necessary," and the temporal passes with time, but the eternal passes not. Would the daily conduct of most men suggest this to a thoughtful observer? Nay, even those who serve God best in other holy but less holy callings, even those who are in the world but not of it, even those who keep before themselves habitually the truth that they are here only for a few years of probation to fit themselves for heaven—even they must still be content to act often as if the things of time were the only necessary business, and the things of eternity were at best but an afterthought, a mere accessory, a secondary consideration. It is well that there should be some whom God calls aside from the crowd, and whose lives and deaths may serve as a protest against the subtle worldliness, the moderate, decorous paganism of this purse-proud nineteenth century, which, like the Pharisee in the Temple, thanks heaven that it is not like other centuries—as a reminder that this earth is not all, that success in life is not all, that wealth and respectability are not all, that God *is* all, the Lord of all worlds and of all souls, and that every man, be his station as high or as low as it may, is but the helpless creature of God, yet very dear to God, and raised by God to so grand an end as this, to love and serve God here, and to love and see and be happy with God *there*. Yes, God is God, and heaven is heaven, aye, and hell is hell; and *we* are what we are! And life is but a narrow and perilous strait between two misty promontories called birth and death, through which narrow and perilous strait all must pass, on to that ocean, unknown and vast, which we name Eternity.

The lives, of which this is the moral, are not selfishly useless. But furthermore, while these secluded souls preach thus mutely to the worldly and vain, they are not mute with God. They pray. Their life is a prayer, and their hours are filled with prayer. They pray to God for you. Who can tell the power of such prayer with Him the All-powerful? How many of the known and unknown graces of your daily lives may descend upon you from this purer air, this higher level, as the stream which skirts your beautiful village is fed by showers falling far away up among the lonely hills! Such prayers breaking the silence of such lives make themselves

heard in heaven. They hold back the bolts of God's anger, they throw open the flood-gates of God's bounty and mercy. In the older pages of sacred story, when battle raged between the Hebrews and the Amalecites, did not Moses in prayer on the mountain fight a better fight for the people of God than Josue with his host? For, when Moses lifted up his arms, Israel conquered, and, when he let them drop, Amalec prevailed. Then Aaron and Hur stayed up the old man's arms on either side, and the old man prayed on, and victory was with Israel. And you, my brethren, like Aaron and the other, you sustain the arms of these feeble virgins, who, removed far from the turmoil of the battlefield and its dust that is laid by blood, pray with unwearying fervour for all who are engaged in the terrible combat, terrible most of all for the wicked, craven fools who slink from the combat and dream they are at peace. And these hands, weak but pure, raised to God in prayer upon the mountain-top, may do more for the final triumph of God's cause than all the stout arms and brave hearts down below in the valley of Raphidim.

But is there not a mistake? Have not I forgotten? Is not all this foreign to the nature of the Sisterhood whom to-day you are welcoming to a new home and a new field of action? For these belong to an Order not contemplative merely but active. I have remembered this all through. I have remembered that the flame of charity when dispersed and refracted through its various outward manifestations attracts more of the admiration of men, even as the white ray of light that has been decomposed in passing through the falling raindrops enchants the eye by the brilliant contrast and exquisite gradation of its hues, while the pure and uninterrupted ray itself, though it contains all these combined, seems colourless by its very intensity. I have remembered this. Nay, these other thoughts, seemingly irrelevant or less appropriate, have been suggested precisely because of this; precisely because, while urging the claims of an institute which in many of its functions exacts the sympathy and applause of even the false philanthropist who in relieving the temporal wants of man would fain ignore God and make abstraction from eternity, there is danger of dwelling too exclusively on the more physical results and forgetting the source of all that is really good and noble and holy in the work. "All the beauty of the King's daughter is from within," and the merit and true success of the Nun's active duties depend on her union with God by prayer and a pure intention, and the virtues of the hidden life. For this is no crude human invention for the better carrying out of the precept of charity by Act of

Parliament, no picturesque experiment in sentimental philanthropy, no amateur association for the practical development of social science. It is a permanent institution in God's Church, which joins to the observance of the evangelical counsels (as we have partly seen) the exercise of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy—as we now pass on to consider.

For they know—those for whom we are striving to excite in our breasts an affectionate envy—they know the force of the old monastic motto, *Laborare est orare*, to toil is to pray, work is worship. They know that the Queen of Virgins is Mother of Mercy also, and Comfortress of the afflicted, and that though her whole life was a hidden life, "hidden with Christ in God," yet she, the silent handmaiden who "kept pondering these things in her heart," knew how to wed action to contemplation, and displayed no impotent or sterile sympathy for even the temporal wants of her brethren—going with haste over the mountains of Judea to help the mother of the Precursor, and whispering to her Divine Son at the marriage feast, "They have no wine". They know that the other Mary who chose "the better part" which *they* have chosen did not always kneel at her Saviour's feet in prayer, but that in the very act of commending her devotion as she knelt there one other time, our Lord added these words, "The poor ye have always with you, but Me you have not always"—leading us to infer that when He has withdrawn His visible presence from us, when He no longer abides among the children of men in human form, subject to all human miseries as He once was, in order to suffer for us and with us and to be like unto us in all things except sin—when Jesus our Emmanuel, still our Emmanuel, our "God with us," is no longer with us *thus : then* we are to show our tenderness towards Him in the persons of His beloved poor, whom we have always with us. Ah! yes, always, especially in poor Ireland. They know, these Sisters of Mercy, that for them in their glorious calling it is not enough to weep at home, like the sisters of Lazarus, over the souls whom Jesus loves, or even, like them, to send messages to Jesus, on the wings of prayer, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick," but that also when Martha whispers to Mary, "The Master is come and calleth thee," that is, when the active duties of their vocation summon them abroad from the tranquil happiness of the beloved cell and the holy convent chapel more beloved, to visit the sick body tenanted often by a soul sick with a deadlier sickness, they must rise quickly and go forth, Martha and Mary together, and, perhaps, seeing their tears, Jesus will weep with them over the wretched creatures whom He loves,

better far than they can love them, whom they love only in Him and through His grace ; and from His lips the word of power may fall, " Lazarus, come forth ! " Poor man, poor woman, poor child, come forth from the grave of sin, of ignorance, of languor, of despair—come forth and live.

There is hardly any department of Christian zeal from which the Sister of Mercy is debarred. By the education of the young she seeks to forestall the fatal influences of the world, the flesh, and the devil on the tender souls just maturing into the power, the awful power, of committing sin. She instructs the adults who had not, when young, the good fortune to be trained in such a school, but who have grown up in ignorance and too often in the vices which ignorance engenders or at least fosters. In her orphanages and widows' homes she shelters the two extremes of life, the helplessness of bereaved childhood and the destitution of forlorn age, verifying the words of the prophet Jeremiah (xix. 11) : " Leave thy fatherless children ; I will make them live ; and thy widows shall hope in me ". To her care also are often confided those beneficent palaces of mortality, such as that which our chief city, so generous and so Catholic, erected recently under the invocation of the Mater Misericordiæ. Hospitals we call them, that is, guest houses, into which throng as bidden guests all the innumerable varieties of human disease and suffering, in search of careful nursing and healing skill better than wealth could command. For servants out of place the Houses of Mercy attached to most of the convents afford a temporary home in which those important members of society, on whom the comfort and well-being of families so much depend, may, in waiting for another service, be trained more carefully for the duties of their state, while in the meantime they are spared the sad necessity of wasting in a few weeks of unwilling idleness the hard-earned savings of years, and secured likewise against other more serious dangers and temptations. And if some wretched creatures, for want of such securities or in any other circumstances of guilt or misery, should have fallen from the virtue for which our Celtic maiden is a proverb—even for such, as the Son of the Immaculate Virgin has mercy for them, so these ministering angels of His mercy have mercy ; and where it is needful and possible, they will open to the repentant outcast a refuge from despair, an asylum where Magdalen may fling herself again at the feet of Jesus and weep, and hear Him say, " Many sins are forgiven thee—go, sin no more ".

But hospitals, Magdalen asylums, reformatories, can only be organised in a few special localities. Little children, however, are

everywhere, and "the poor ye have always with you," and sickness and death are strangers at no time and in no place. The Sister of Mercy therefore binds herself above all by a more stringent and universal obligation to aid the action of grace on souls at the two seasons when such efforts have the most likelihood of success—in childhood and during serious malady. When the hand of God presses upon us, when sickness puts us in mind of death, when the vivid glow of health is gone, our appreciations of many things are modified, we wonder at the dreadful fascination which certain feelings and objects have wielded over us, we begin to see that after all we must some time or other and before very long drop out of this world, and that really, if a man were wise, he would look to it. At this crisis, to the bedside of the sick, especially if recommended by the further attraction of misery and destitution, God sends on His errand of mercy visitors who, in striving and pleading for the poor soul's salvation, will attend with all thoughtful charity to the wants of the perishable body, even to the providing of the little luxuries or rather necessaries which the ailing palate would crave in vain from penury, while (better than food or medicine) they will bring into the bare comfortless room the soft voice of sympathy and affectionate compassion, cheerful holy words, a kind face, and by the prayer of the heart more than of the lips they will win the sufferer to bless the Hand that chastises in love ; and, if all their care may not retain him in life, they will teach him how to die.

But life is the prophet of death. He who lives well cannot die ill. "Happy they who have borne the yoke of God from their youth." How many a death-bed owes its peacefulness and its hopefulness to the early training of the convent school ! "Suffer, then, the little children to come to Me." You yield to-day, my brethren, to our Lord's entreaty, you not only "forbid them not," you not only allow the little children to approach Him whose "delight is to be with the children of men" ; but you take them by the hand and lead them to Jesus, that He may take them up tenderly in His arms, as He lifted up that favoured child in the Gospel who leaned his little head against the breast of the Messiah, forestalling the privilege of St. John. These, too, He will take to His heart ; their place is still there. For neither the beloved disciple nor that infant rival of his enjoys any monopoly of God's love. God is love, and God is infinite, and so is His love. The mystery of God's love is not at an end ; it lives, it acts, immortally. The Heart against which the cheek of that little child was pressed, so as to feel Its very beatings, was beating then and beats now with a true personal love for each of us, and for each of the little

children of our lanes and cabins. Each of these little ones has a soul, can love God with that soul, can save that soul or lose it, can do so much good and so much harm to so many other souls—good and harm for time and for eternity. The whole material world could not pay down the value of the soul of one of these little ones. This world is not a world of kingdoms and republics, of arts and sciences, of armies and parliaments, of mountains and plains, of streets and fields, of mines of coal and gold, of fruitful or barren lands, fruitful or barren seas—it is only a world of souls. God's eye is upon souls only. God loves only souls. *Domine qui amas animas!* Long before the new Law of Love began, the Almighty was thus addressed as the "Lord who loveth souls," and even then He yearned for souls with a father's yearning, entreating them tenderly, "Child, give Me thy heart". But since then the Lord God of Hosts has become peculiarly the Lord God of little children; for the Child Jesus has nestled in the Virgin Mary's arms, and the little children have nestled in the arms of Jesus, and Jesus has said, as He is saying in your hearts this moment, "Suffer little children to come to Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven". *Of such.* Yes, not of them alone, but of such as they. And who may feel a happier trust that theirs also is the Kingdom of Heaven than these may feel who strive so well in their inner lives to be as little children in purity of heart and religious obedience, and who hardly appear save in this blessed enterprise of bringing the little children to Jesus?

They bring the little children to Jesus and to the knowledge and love of His law by a true education, by all the nameless details of that conscientious training of mind and heart and hand which will fit them for the real duties of their state, and (perhaps more than by any positive knowledge imparted) by that potent magnetism of their own character and example, and all those subtle influences of voice and look and manner which the young are so quick to study and which gradually refine the most froward, lifting them insensibly (with whatsoever space between) up towards that uniform type of character assigned by a recent writer[1] to all Sisters of Mercy in common—"gentle, patient, hardworking, humble, obedient, charitable, and, above all, simple and joyous". At any rate the religious who have thus been characterized endeavour to form their pupils to habits of industry, modesty, truth, and piety, elevating into a principle in their hearts the traditional instinct of their humble virtuous homes, imbuing them with a love and reverence for duty, though duty be almost always toil and often

[1] Father Henry James Coleridge, S.J.

suffering, sanctifying thus the poverty of the poor and perpetuating the innocence of the innocent—perpetuating by transmuting it, transmuting the innocence of ignorance into the better and safer innocence of virtue.

And if here I went on to urge the temporal advantages that accrue from all this to innumerable families in helping them to "earn" and to save their earnings, and to keep their poor firesides decent and fairly comfortable, I should not be afraid of running counter to the First Beatitude. God forbid that with sacrilegious hand I should dare to filch one jewel from the sacred diadem of poverty. But if riches carry with them their fearful perils, the lowest extreme of penury has its own dangers also, and in our day perhaps more than in any day. No, not the poverty of hopeless misery, of indolent beggary, of sloth, of thriftlessness, of drunkenness, of sin—not the poverty that dooms to the poorhouse, for the poorhouse is no school of industry or virtue—not the poverty that festers in the lanes and alleys of overcrowded cities like London or Liverpool, where the unfortunate children wallow in filth and ignorance with all the vulgarities of vice rampant shamelessly around them; not the poverty which breaks up the wretched but beloved home, and scatters the poor victims forth to huddle in those squalid dens, or to cross the ocean perhaps for worse, far away from the sound of the Irish chapel-bell and its Sabbath summons, so well obeyed; not the poverty that works such results as these is that poverty which is blessed of Heaven, and not all, alas! who suffer poverty make good their title to the Gospel Beatitude of the Poor. But the poverty which does not condemn to idleness and despair and crime, but only to unceasing labour and many privations endured with resignation—the poverty that is able and willing to accept that condition which for fallen man is not a curse so much as a punishment, nay almost a blessing, "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread". Out in the fields under God's sunshine and God's rain, and in the simple homesteads where constant cheerful toil, where honest Christian pride, where the attachments of race and home, are powerful allies with religion and all her sacramental and unsacramental graces in enabling so many to practise great virtues almost without knowing them to be virtues—where half a parish is but as one family, all taking an interest in each other's fortunes, all taking shame in each other's faults, and thus making human respect (so often an incentive to evil) the check of passion and the safeguard of all good—where enmities and scandals are as utterly unknown as crime—where the unvarying round of duties, dis-

charged day by day, year after year, hardly leaving space for the simplest pleasures, makes of the blessed Sunday a true and a doubly welcome day of rest—where the salutary ordinances of the Church are observed with filial docility, the plain home-like chapel crowded always, and on the great Feasts so many gathered round the Communion rails, though all this does not imply merely a few minutes' walk to a street hard by, but often a journey of many toilsome miles down and up steep mountain roads in all weathers —where in these ways and a thousand others the pure strong faith of Irish Catholic hearts avows itself and points towards Heaven, and cools the summer's heat and makes the wintry blast less keen, and the burden of life so much easier to bear. This is not wealth, this is not abject poverty, but I think that in the eyes of the angels this is not the least enviable of human lots, and this is or at least used to be—for, as some may have guessed, I have not drawn upon fancy but upon memory for this picture—this used to be and is Killowen. And I trust that the other portions also of this parish, of which memory has not so many an old tale to tell me, are just as truly and as practically Catholic as the hamlets that stud the fields along the shore, from where the wooded mountain slopes down to the margin of our exquisite Bay on to the Causeway Water.

By to-day's work you are doing your best to secure that whatever change is in store for this little corner of God's Church may be in this regard a change only from good to better. The children of to-day are the fathers and mothers of the coming years ; good mothers are among God's most efficacious means of saving the souls for whose salvation Jesus died. The children for whose education you are providing will as daughters, as sisters, as wives, as mothers, as women, promote and cherish the sanctity and happiness of many and many a hearth. God help them in all their struggles, wherever they may be ! And if, perhaps, not all here at home—if (may God forbid it for their own sake and for Ireland's !), but if some of these also must indeed leave the homes where their fathers and mothers have lived before them, lived and toiled and prayed and suffered and been happy, as happiness may be in this valley of weeping ; let them take with them, as a token from the poor old land, not, as has been sometimes done, a green sod dug from an Irish meadow,[1] but

[1] A week or two after these words were spoken, Mr. Pope Hennessy (afterwards Sir John Pope Hennessy) said almost the same thing on the hustings at Wexford : " They should remember the condition of their country. Every year Great Britain was increasing in population and

let them take the faith, the piety, the purity, the modest self-respect, the love for all things good and the reverence for all things sacred, which *you* will teach them in the Convent Schools.

And would to God that all of our blood and faith who are scattered over the face of God's earth, where God pleases or at least where God permits, might all bear away with them, and preserve along with their little means, these better treasures. And as of old our great St. Patrick in a vision saw the children of the Irish who stretched out their hands to him and said, "Come to us, O holy youth, and dwell amongst us"—ah! would that even thus the children of the Irish in their turn, in all the strange lands which have ceased to be strange to them, might hear from heaven the voice of their Apostle: "Cling, O my children, to the faith, which Jesus Christ and His Vicar sent me to preach to you; forget not the prayers you learned at your mother's knee; practise with pride and love the religion which your fathers cherished in darker days than these; show yourselves, wheresoever your lot may be thrown, worthy children of saints and martyrs."

Yes, martyrs. Let me pursue this train of ideas a little further, for it is not a distraction but an argument. Not saints only but martyrs. For were not they martyrs, the men, the women, and the children who sustained that long battle of heroic fidelity from which this miracle results that, despite a system of persecution so insidious, so obstinate, so remorseless, that every Protestant of moderate fairness has branded it with the fiercest reprobation, Ireland nevertheless has remained Catholic and Catholic to the heart's core? Martyrs? Yet on the feasts of Irish saints the priest stands at the altar robed in the white of virgin or confessor, not in the red vestments which symbolize the blood of martyrdom. But this only reminds us that even pagan Ireland had a marvellous instinct for the Faith of Christ, and did not, like other countries, put to death the messengers whom the Master of the Vineyard sent to her but received them with gladness. Still you have heard of that stranger from the other shore who made it a reproach to one of our forefathers long ago that the Irish Church was thus unconsecrated by the baptism of blood; and you remember the answer:

in wealth—her railways were increasing in prosperity; but how was it with Ireland? Her population were flying from her shores—he saw, month after month, the young men and the young women of Ireland crowd the emigrant ships in Cork harbour, many of them carrying with them a tuft of grass, or some little portion of their homestead, so that if they died across the Atlantic a bit of the old soil might be laid upon their graves."

"You and yours will soon wipe out that stain for ever". The answer was a prophecy, and the penal days (which were centuries) have fulfilled the prophecy and made Ireland the Virgin Martyr of the nations. No martyrs of the Irish race? Ireland's history is a martyrology. Every graveyard in holy Ireland—all over her hillsides and her valleys and her plains, west and east, south and north, every old Kilbroney within the four seas is rich with the bones of martyrs. Nor can even those who think or pretend to think that all this was endured so long, so long, not for God's Truth, but for foolish and abominable error—no candid mind amongst them can blame us for aspiring to draw at least this moral from the story of those who have gone before us, never to blush for the Faith for which they bled, to smile with pity at our own paltry sacrifices for our religion (thank God, we have some to make) when we compare them with theirs, and according to our altered circumstances, more tranquil but hardly less perilous, to make this green Ireland still and for ever that which she assuredly has been through all the changes of her past, a living proof of the divinity of the one Church, Catholic, indestructible, everlasting.

Will not *you* do your part in this glorious work? Who can doubt it *here?* Here where every block of chiselled granite, every oaken beam, every ray of this tinted light which floods the sanctuary with so religious a radiance, where everything proclaims your faith, your generosity, your pious zeal for the beauty of God's house.

But now it rushes in upon me again, a thought which like some other thoughts I have striven to keep back within my heart, for he who addresses men in God's name ought not to remember his own—but, dear friends, I have faith in your kindness, I know you will forgive me if no longer I pretend to forget the gentle providence which has brought to pass what was unlikely, that although my lot has been cast elsewhere, this portion of my ministry should nevertheless have its beginning here. For never before until this hour has it been my duty as a priest of God to speak thus to the souls of any of God's creatures; and so, after all, the first of His public temples in which I must presume to lift my voice is this—this which is certainly not new to me or strange, linked as it is with the fondest and most precious recollections of childhood and youth, and if not linked immediately with the holiest epoch of all, the day of First Communion, it is that, like most of you, I can recall the poor old weather-beaten chapel with its stained walls and its rough earthen floor to which so gracious and so noble an edifice succeeds. May you, may all they who will worship here through all the years till this massive pile shall

crumble in its turn—may you be as fervent and as true as those who once knelt in this sacred spot under a less sightly roof, and prayed that God's grace and blessing might rest with you their children, then but little children or unborn. And their prayer was heard.

For it is no common sign of God's grace and blessing that not out of your too great abundance, nor in the best of times—far from it—this worthier temple stands now in its simple majesty upon the same consecrated ground. But, my brethren, you will not let me confine the merit to yourselves; for, just as in this other holy work which you accomplish to-day, your zeal was nobly succoured (was it not?) by the liberality of many a benefactor far and near.

But who enlisted those charitable auxiliaries? Who organized, guided and sustained your efforts? God forbid that we should be so ungrateful as not to allude on such a solemnity to him whose last desire was to add this work to all that he had done. Not for us, but for those who are to come after us, have pious hands placed beside the altar of the Madonna yonder tablet [1] so touching in its modest reticence. Were that marble dumb, were *we* dumb, the very echoes of this holy place would whisper of him. It is his monument, nay, it is his sepulchre; for as of old the Lawgiver of Athens bade them strew his ashes round the island he had won for his country, so beneath this new sanctuary, this new fortress erected for the adornment and defence of the Church Militant, the bones of its Founder await the Resurrection. And so to him might here be appropriated the epitaph of the architect of St. Paul's in London. "If you seek for his monument," they have written beneath the bust of Sir Christopher Wren—"If you seek for his monument, look around you." *Si monumentum quaeris, circumspice.*

[1] "*Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuae* (Psalm xxv. 8). Of your charity pray for the repose of the soul of the Rev. Bernard Mooney, P.P., whose remains lie within the sanctuary. He was pastor of this parish for seventeen years, during which time this Church was erected. He departed this life on 25 November, 1864, in the sixty-third year of his age. *Requiescat in pace.* Amen."

After twenty-five years more of most holy and most fruitful priestly work, Father Mooney's admirable successor died in his turn and went to his reward. His memorial tablet on the wall of the same beautiful church bears this inscription:—

"*Beloved of God and men, his memory is in benediction* (Ecclus. xlv. 1). Of your charity pray for the soul of the Very Rev. Patrick O'Neill, P.P., V.F., who died 16 April, 1890, in the seventieth year of his age and the forty-fifth of his sacred ministry. R.I.P."

In like manner, this beautiful church is Father Mooney's monument. It is the last and greatest, but by no means the only proof of that love for the beauty of God's House which his memorial tablet claims for him. Already two dwellings for the Most High, and one for His minister, erected in the northern portion of this diocese, attested sufficiently the quiet energy and self-sacrifice of this humble, unassuming priest. But the crowning trophy of his life was this Church of our Lady of Rostrevor, which cost him many a journey, many a toilsome day, aye and many a sleepless night (he told me so), many a cruel anxiety, many a hope and many a disappointment. *Si monumentum quaeris, circumspice.*

And where was the source of this strong purpose achieving these marvellous results? Yes, in the circumstances of time and place and person results simply marvellous. An earnest piety, a sober systematic enthusiasm in the pursuit of duty and of duty alone, and this continued through all the days of his lengthened term of years. It is a solemn charge—the pastor of many souls, father of so many families, their guide and helper in more than spiritual needs, watching those whom he baptized growing up through childhood and youth, and those whom he prepared for the other holy sacraments passing on to manhood and womanhood, and so many of his flock, the young and the old, dying and seen no more; able to do so much, so very much for the good (in this world and the other) of so many of God's creatures; able to do so much and doing it. Ah! these things are not written in history; but, when history has reached her last page, we shall see that the truest man is he who strives to serve God faithfully in the post which God assigns him, as Father Bernard Mooney strove to do in his. If this memento of one in whom I too found a kind and a constant friend through many a year may have touched your filial piety, I will think of those whom he trained up in virtue and in the holy faith and discipline of the Catholic Church, living temples of the Holy Ghost, indefinitely more precious each of them than this, than all temples brilliant with gold and marble; and, as the best monument of your pastor—I speak only of the dead; of the living (though I could say much) I say nothing except that he compensates for such a loss—as the worthiest memorial of him whose second anniversary is near at hand, I will point to you his faithful and devoted children, and I will say again, *Si monumentum quaeris, circumspice.* And then once again I will interpret the mute eloquence of your eyes and of your hearts, and I will pray in your name, and with you in my own, "May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace."

But he is gone, gone to his judgment, gone to his reward; and we remain. We have still to live; we have still to endure the patient martyrdom of life. How long? God only knows. But God knows also your hearts this moment. He knows that you grieve for having done so little for so good a God and done so much against Him. And He knows too that you are praying humbly for grace to remember always that your hand's most secret deed, that your soul's most silent thought, is at every instant clear before the eye of Him the Lord and Judge from Whose lips you hope to hear the words of welcome, "Come, ye blessed of my Father."

You hope to hear those words. Gain for yourselves this day a new right to that hope, seal the good purposes with which God's grace has inspired you, by giving with a pure intention and a generous heart the offering of thanksgiving, of reparation, of charity, you are now about to make to God before His altar. "It is a blessed thing to give." Give for the good of your own poor souls and the souls that are very dear to you among the dead and among the living. Give in the name of the afflicted, the sick, the dying, and of all the poor and miserable; in the name of the children who will owe to these Sisters of Mercy lessons and memories that will help to keep them safe in the perils of life; in the name not only of those favourites of Jesus, little children and the poor, but of His dearer friends, these who for His sake have made themselves poor and have become as the little children of whom they are the visible guardian angels; in the name of their invisible guardian angels also who (as our Saviour tells us) always see the face of our Father who is in Heaven; in the name of all the blessed spirits, human and angelic, who while they rejoice (as our Saviour tells us again) over every repentant tear that is shed on earth, must surely take a joyful interest in a work like this; in the name of Her their Queen and Mother, Mother of those who mourn, and of those who console the mourner, and who help the needy, Mother of Mercy, for whose sake these her daughters are called Sisters of Mercy; in the name of her Divine Son, Jesus our Lord; in the name of God.

EMMANUEL CHAPEL, CONVENT OF MERCY, NEWRY
IN MEMORY OF MARY EMMANUEL RUSSELL

EMMANUEL CHAPEL [1]

"I have chosen and have sanctified this place, that My name may be there for ever, and that My heart may remain there perpetually." This sixteenth verse of the seventh chapter of the second book of Paralipomena is one of the promises made by Almighty God in favour of the great temple that King Solomon had built of the richest materials, and had adorned with the utmost magnificence. Holy as that temple was, its holiness fades away before the holiness of any Christian church. Nay, the meanest country chapel in Ireland, even if it still bears the marks of the penal days in its squalid poverty, is more venerable than the Temple of Jerusalem with all its gold and costly stones. For wherever there is a tabernacle, unless we know that the tabernacle is for a time untenanted, there we must bow down in adoration and say, "How terrible is this place! This is no other than the House of God and the gate of Heaven" (Gen. xxviii. 17). Such is this sacred edifice, which to-day begins to be what it will continue to be, perhaps for hundreds of years after all of us are gone, a shrine of the Blessed Sacrament, a shelter for our eucharistic Lord, a source of grace and light to generation after generation of consecrated souls.

But the inspired words I began with may well be supposed to hold a very special and almost personal meaning when applied to this convent chapel, which has gathered us together this morning for its first service of sacrifice and prayer. "I have chosen and have sanctified this place, that My name may be there for ever, and that My heart may remain there perpetually." His name and His heart. This convent of the Sisters of Mercy in Newry is dedicated to the Heart of Jesus; and this chapel, by which the convent within a year of its Golden Jubilee is at last completed, will bear the name of Jesus; for in both the Old and the New Testaments it is written: "His name shall be called Emmanuel" (Is. vii. 2; Matt. i. 23). And so, too, this newest of our Lord's sanctuaries is to be called.

You will let me dwell almost exclusively upon the significance of that name, "Emmanuel Chapel," although I do not forget that there are other personal associations clinging to these holy walls. I do not forget that others also have sisters in heaven.[2] The

[1] In the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy, Newry, dedicated by the Most Rev. Dr. O'Neill, Bishop of Dromore, 20 July, 1904.

[2] The sister of the Bishop who presided on this occasion had lived a holy life and died a happy death in this Convent of Mercy.

coloured light that streams in through those "storied windows" will keep bright the memory of some who in this convent-home prepared themselves for the true home of heaven. We know not how far our Father who is in heaven may be pleased to allow the children He has taken to Himself to watch the concerns of the children He has left behind for a time; but it is hard to imagine those of whom we are thinking to be so changed from what they were as not to be interested in such an event as the opening of Emmanuel Chapel.[1] I shall be forgiven if I overlook everything else for the present except the fact that this chapel bears the name Emmanuel, and that so unusual a name has been given to it in loving remembrance of one who was the first, at least amongst Irish nuns, to take that name at the baptismal font as it were of religious life when making that final consecration of her whole self for the remainder of her days, which has been likened to a second baptism. She chose the name, I distinctly remember, without any prompting from others, and thinking that she was the first to choose it; and she chose it with direct advertence to its eucharistic meaning, for she knew that St. Matthew in quoting Isaiah explains to us that the name Emmanuel is made up of Hebrew words signifying "God with us". God is indeed with us through the supreme mystery of the Incarnation; but still more closely and more permanently is God with us through His presence under the sacramental veils upon our altars, and often within our hearts. It was to remind herself of this deepest and dearest mystery of the divine love and condescension that Sister Mary Emmanuel selected this unfamiliar name as the one she was to be known by in the intercourse of her new life; and, as this name is henceforth for her sake to be perpetuated in this chapel, would it be lawful to adapt to her those words of the great prophet that are guiding the current of our thoughts? For is it not true that she indeed chose this place and sanctified it, and that her name and heart will abide here for ever?

She will not be forgotten, and she will not forget. She would not have been forgotten, even if no such memorial had been thought of; but this chapel and its name will help to keep her

[1] A grave Professor of Theology, the Rev. George Crolly, in a letter of consolation to his dear friend, Dr. Russell, President of Maynooth College, on the death of his youngest sister, wrote as follows: "I am certain that her pure spirit will be constantly near, and watching over, all those whom she loved so well on earth. For if even the rich glutton did not forget his brethren on earth, what must be the love with which their beloved ones are watched over by those who dwell in the infinite love of God!"

still more constantly before your minds, dear Sisters ; and, if this remembrance should sometimes renew your sorrow for having her with you visibly no longer, try to take to yourselves the consolation that St. Jerome offered to the Bishop Heliodorus for the death of his nephew Nepotian : "Ne doleas quod talem amiseris, sed gaude quod talem habueris". And you—grieve not that you have lost such a sister, but rejoice that such a sister has been yours. Nay, I will not even allow you to accept the sorrowful comfort of that past tense, "has been". She is still yours, you have her still, she is still with you, present still to faith and hope and love. And nowhere will you feel her present thus so vividly as when you are praying in this beautiful chapel which you have linked with her religious name.

No other memorial could be nearly so appropriate to Mother Emmanuel as this ; for from her earliest childhood to her last breath she was ardently devoted to our Blessed Lord in all the phases of His eucharistic life. It happens that this overmastering devotion was betrayed by the very first words that I remember falling from her lips. Many a sweet and amiable word and deed I must have seen and heard before ; but I can recall nothing in particular earlier than a very simple incident that I have mentioned thrice in print. Once it took the form of a little story about two children, a sister and a brother, who used to be sent together on various errands across the town in which they lived, and how the sister took care that their route should always lead them past the chapel, as we called the cathedral in those days when the old Ascendancy shadow still brooded over the land. The girl would steal quietly up to the communion rail, as if wishing to draw as close as possible to the altar, there to pour out the homage of her young heart's love before the Emmanuel of the Tabernacle. One day her prayers lasted longer than usual, and, as they were coming away, her companion must have looked aggrieved or, perhaps, complained openly of the length of their visit : for his sister explained with a smile that she had waited till some one should enter the church to take their place, so that our Blessed Lord might not be left alone. She did not forget, I am sure, that our Lord can never be alone, that invisible hosts of angels adore Him perpetually ; but she knew, too, that it is for our sake, not for theirs, He abides upon our altars. God allows us to use human language and to show human feelings in dealing with His Divine Majesty ; and the sanctuary before which a lamp is burning *has* a lonely look if no human worshipper be kneeling near.

It is strange how certain words, spoken casually, little heeded

at the time, will lurk in the memory and make themselves heard again after many years. The smiling apology that our young devotee of the Blessed Sacrament tendered to her little comrade for their unduly protracted visit may have seemed to make slight impression on him then, yet the echo of her words lingered on mysteriously in his heart; and long afterwards the incident reappears in a little sequence of eucharistic verses which the less fervent of the two adorers sent to the more fervent when she had just finished her noviceship in this convent. One of these pieces was a "thanksgiving visit," supposed to be paid in the afternoon of a communion-day. [1]

Again I kneel before the shrine
Whence Love came forth this morn
To nestle in this heart of mine,
E'en of itself the scorn.
That thankless heart has scarce since then
Sent back one sigh to Thee,
Whilst, Lover of unloving men!
Thy Heart kept watch for me.

So all day long and all the night
Here dost Thou fondly hide,
For 'tis Thy marvellous delight
Thus near me to abide;
And 'midst the praise of every land
Thou would'st my homage miss!
My heart, though hard, can not withstand
The shock of love like this.

Oh! for *her* earnest faith who said
To me, a heedless boy,
When some long "visit" that we paid
Would my dull faith annoy:
"Now wait and say another prayer
(How quick the time has flown!)
Till some one comes. I cannot bear
To leave Him all alone."

Yes, those were the very words. "I don't like to leave Him alone." Him! Our Lord was not even named; and this has sometimes reminded me of St. Mary Magdalen on the first Easter morning in the garden of the sepulchre, when she imagines that all hearts must be full of the thought that fills her own heart, and she says to the supposed gardener without having named our

[1] See "Altar Flowers," p. 50, and "At Home near the Altar," p. 32.

Lord at all, "Tell me where they have laid Him, and I will take Him away".

This, then, is the first word I can recall out of Mother Emmanuel's share of all the bright talk that filled innocently and happily the days and hours of those long-past years. And the last word that I heard her utter related also to that most Blessed Sacrament which had always been the great central object of her thoughts and prayers and feelings and desires. It was the single word, "Confiteor," an hour before her death, a moment before her last Communion. The Confiteor had in reality been said for her already, but in so low and sad a tone that the sound had not reached her failing senses. She had not heard it; and yet she was so much herself to the very last, so conscious and watchful and exact, that she made this exertion, even at such a moment, in her anxiety to have the fancied omission supplied, just before receiving her Divine Lord for the last time, the last of so many times. She received Him that last time into a heart as pure and innocent as the first time at her First Communion long ago, but now into a heart, oh! how much richer and more beautiful than then, with all the virtues and merits of a fruitful and faultless life.

Those who know more than even I do about Mother Emmanuel's devotion to the Blessed Sacrament will let me edify those who know less by mentioning a few simple things that allowed the fervour of her faith and the depth of her feelings to be seen in spite of her self-restraint, her cheerful unaffected ways, and the calm common-sense that marked all that she did and said. Her sisters in religion tell us that her love for our Lord and her faith in His eucharistic presence were wonderfully vivid and intense, that she seemed to be constantly thinking of Him and labouring for Him, and that with all her untiring efforts to beautify the surroundings of His sacramental dwelling she could never do enough to content her zeal. It was her delight to adorn—with what skilful hands and with what a loving heart!—the altar of repose on Holy Thursday, not only at home here in the Mother House, but also in the branch houses to which she went year after year for this purpose.

But the home that she best loved to prepare for the reception of the Divine Guest was the one that He Himself loves best of all. She seemed to hear Him saying, not as He said to St. Peter and St. John before the first of all First Communions, "Make ready a large upper room furnished," but, "Make ready for Me these little childish hearts". Would that we had some record of the

instructions that she gave to First Communicants year after year so long! This was her work of predilection, for she felt, as Pius the Tenth has lately said, that no tabernacle seems so beautiful to our Lord as the innocent heart of a child.

And yet, may we not venture on this point to contradict our Holy Father? Still more beautiful surely is the heart that preserves to old age the innocence of childhood; and into such a heart our Lord enters with still greater joy. Blessed are they who receive Him week by week and almost day after day through the busy years of a long lifetime, and each time with the fervour, the care, and the purity of the holiest First Communion. Such, we may be assured, was the lifelong series of Mother Emmanuel's Communions, so fervent and so frequent always, and almost daily for years before she was able to break away from the world, from her very unworldly share of the world. It was from the Blessed Sacrament that she drew all her strength and sweetness—her cheerful piety, her tranquil recollection of spirit, her bright serenity of countenance, her rapt concentration of mind and heart in prayer, which seemed her natural element, her reverence for the priesthood, her love for the beauty of God's house, her zeal for everything that regarded in any way the Adorable Sacrifice of the Mass. Instead, however, of trying to illustrate these and other manifestations of that deep and absorbing devotion to the Blessed Eucharist, which we might almost dare to call the predominant passion of this favoured soul, I will end, or at least begin to come to an end, by drawing a practical conclusion that may be suitable for all of us in the different circumstances of our respective lots.

You, dear Sisters, in whose daily lives Emmanuel Chapel will henceforth play the most important part—you do not need to be exhorted to avail yourselves to the utmost of the stupendous privilege that you possess, the privilege of living under the same roof with the Divine Lover of souls who vouchsafes to enable the happy inmates of convents and religious houses to give a more emphatic and more literal meaning to the text which we have more than once referred to and which is inscribed on the wall of this sanctuary, "His name shall be called Emmanuel". Ah, if this privilege were taken from you or abridged or interrupted, what vows you would make, what promises of additional fervour, what entreaties you would pour forth to God to have the boon restored to you! Contrast your fortunate circumstances in this regard with what I read a few weeks ago in the "Life of Mother Theodore Guérin," who about the year 1840 led across the Atlantic and across a great stretch of the American continent a brave

little band of French Nuns called Sisters of Providence, whom the bishop of the diocese that is now known as Indianapolis planted in the midst of a vast forest, which was also at that time a vast solitude. St. Mary of the Woods is at present a noble and very flourishing convent, one of the great centres of female education in the United States, and the six pioneers have multiplied into eight hundred religious in some sixty houses ; but the beginnings of the work were full of hardships and privations. The privation those heroic women felt most keenly was not their being separated by thousands and thousands of miles of land and sea from all their friends and kinsfolk, nor their exile in a rude, unsettled country, such as Indiana certainly was then, among a sparse and scattered population of whose language they were ignorant; all this, and material wants that often pressed upon them sorely, did not afflict the poor nuns nearly so much as the spiritual destitution to which the dearth of priests, and the immense distances between church and church, sometimes exposed them. They were often far more forlorn than on a certain new foundation where they had to walk a mile to Mass ; but I am reminded of this case as a contrast to the consolations that you, dear Sisters, enjoy, by a letter in which one of the nuns bewails the fact that the morning Mass was their only provision for the day, as a visit to the church in the evening would have interfered too much with the duties of the community. "It is a great consolation," she adds—and this is why I quote her—"it is a great consolation to visit the Blessed Sacrament. Oh, if we could have this privilege a few times a week!" You, dear Sisters, have this privilege not merely a few times in the week, but as often in the day as the blessed routine of your duty permits. God forbid that this ease and this familiarity should make you undervalue the happiness that is yours.

You, too, my dear brethren, who do not (if I may put it so) share the ownership of this exquisite chapel with its Divine Tenant, but have only come from without to take part in this domestic festival of those who are within—perhaps out of the countless graces of which Emmanuel Chapel will through a long course of years be the source this may be the first, to inspire you this moment with the desire and the resolve to kneel before some other tabernacle as often as the duties and the pleasures (which are sometimes duties also) in your state of life will allow you.

There is a pious fancy that, when we enter any church for the first time, any church in which we have never prayed before, we are sure to obtain the grant of the first petition offered up by us

in that sacred spot. If we have not yet exercised this privilege in this new home, of which our Hidden God has this morning taken possession, earning afresh the sweet name we have so often repeated, what more appropriate object could there be for our first prayer in Emmanuel Chapel than to beg for a larger portion of the eucharistic spirit of her whose name and memory are here enshrined? Would this be too solemn a form for such a petition? O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst fill the heart of Thy handmaid, Mary Emmanuel, with the most tender love for the Sacrament of Thy love, grant that we also may feel our hearts burning within us and may know Thee in the breaking of bread. Be Thou for us also our Emmanuel, "Nobiscum Deus," "God with us"—with us through life and in death and for all eternity.

COLOPHON.

"Such was the dust with which the dust of Monmouth mingled." A brilliant paragraph in Macaulay's "History of England" winds up with these simple words. But "what matter where we fall to fill the maw of worms?" Not the body that crumbles into dust but the soul that lives for ever is the supremely interesting thing. After telling so much about these beautiful souls, these three Irish Sisters of Mercy, I am disposed to echo the historian's phrase and to end by saying, "Such were the hearts that by prayer and sisterly sympathy were wound round the brave heart of Charles Russell". In his boyhood their presence and their comradeship were part of the training that helped to prepare him for his strenuous fight with circumstances not always favourable for such success as he was determined to achieve. From youth till age they followed him with their love and gentle counsels and fervent prayers. In all the relations of life he showed himself the worthy brother of such sisters. May their memory and his abide as a sanctifying influence for those who bless God that they can claim kinship with them, and for those also who may come to know them and love them through these simple pages.

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